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## CURRENT COMMENT.

GOVERNOR PINCHOT'S trumpet-call to Mr. Coolidge to put down the new "Whisky Rebellion" in Pennsylvania should be taken for exactly what it is, namely: a bid for further support for the Governor of Pennsylvania in his race with Mr. Coolidge for the presidential nomination next year. Why does not Governor Pinchot make some real effort to put down the "Whisky Rebellion" himself? The laws of the State of Pennsylvania provide for State co-operation in enforcing the Federal prohibitory law, as do the laws of numerous other States, and Governor Pinchot is bound by his oath of office to see that the laws are duly applied. Only a few weeks ago he was attracting some attention by bringing the coal-operators and miners' unions together; but when prohibition is to be dealt with, he issues a resounding ultimatum to the Philadelphia saloon-keepers, takes a tour about the city and discovers that his proclamation is contemptuously ignored, and then cries to the President of the United States to intervene. Governor Pinchot's revival of the "Whisky Rebellion" incident was ill-advised. Washington, when the internal-revenue laws were opposed in western Pennsylvania in 1794, met the defiance by a display of military force so overwhelming that the "rebels" promptly faded from view. If Mr. Coolidge were to take up in earnest Governor Pinchot's demagogic challenge, which of the two would be likely to have the better chance in the Republican convention?

MR. HENRY FORD has made serious charges against Mr. Weeks, the Secretary of War, and the Administration. Mr. Ford accuses Mr. Weeks of seeking to invalidate, on behalf of certain financial interests engaged in the manufacture of fertilizer, his plan to purchase and develop the Government's Muscle Shoals property as a large-scale nitrate-producing plant and power-plant. Mr. Ford asserts that the recent sale to the Alabama Power Company of a large steam-plant connected with Muscle Shoals was the first step towards dividing the big development and selling it off piecemeal, so that its usefulness as a manufactory of cheap fertilizer would be destroyed. "I have a very strong conviction," says Mr. Ford, "that while we have been negotiating with Mr. Weeks, we have not been negotiating with the United States Government."

THIS is a shattering broadside, and considering Mr. Ford's high standing with the farmers, it is certain to cause the Administration increasing embarrassment unless it can be shown that Mr. Ford is suffering from delusions. Henry, it is true, apparently accepted the discredited Jewish Protocols, foisted upon him by some zealous subordinate, but in industrial matters he is not wont to chase mares' nests. His words can not be waved aside as mere political propaganda. Mr. Weeks has replied that the Gorgas steam-plant, which he sold, was not an essential part of Muscle Shoals, and that he got a good price for it; but this leaves untouched the larger implications of Mr. Ford's arraignment. Here, it seems to us, is a fine opportunity for the considerable element in Congress pledged to promote the welfare of those who work the land. Let them sift the whole business to the bottom, and determine whether Mr. Ford is either romancing or trying to get something for nothing, or whether Secretary Weeks is attempting to sell out the farmer in favour of certain privileged interests. This is an important matter to every American who is compelled to purchase food. The Muscle Shoals development has been gathering rust long enough, and it is high time that its elaborate machinery, built up at the expense of the taxpayers, were put to work, whether under the direction of Henry Ford or of some one else.

CHANCELLOR STRESEMANN has secured his dictatorial powers through an overwhelming vote of the Reichstag, and, in the face of increasing disturbances in Germany, one wonders what he will do with them, or what they will do with him. His task is to ride and master a number of wild horses at once, and if he can keep them under control and avoid a smash-up or some centrifugal disaster, he will prove himself a skilled performer indeed. We doubt if Lloyds in its most venturesome moment would give a quotation on his political expectation. The new Bavarian dictator still holds aloof from Berlin, and in Saxony Communists have entered the Socialist Cabinet, forming a "Government of republican and proletarian defence" which declares in Dresden that the decrees of Berlin are invalid. Local soviets have sprung up in the Saxon land, and Red guards police the cities.

ACCORDING to the Paris correspondent of the *New York World*, M. Poincaré recently had a pointed conversation with the German chargé d'affaires over matters in the Ruhr. The representative of the German Government stated that Chancellor Stresemann was desirous of reaching an understanding with M. Poincaré for the restoration of production and normal conditions in the Ruhr. The French Premier, according to the story, replied politely that his agents in the Ruhr were already conducting their negotiations directly with the German industrialists in that territory, and he saw no reason for talking with Herr Stresemann. The *World's* correspondent in Paris confirmed this phase of the situation and asserted that Herr Stresemann had yielded to the hard fact. We are inclined to give some credence to the story, for M. Poincaré is the greatest realist in Western Europe and it would be in character for him to deal with the owners of property rather than with more or less temporary political mannikins. If the story be true, the significance of it is that,



politically speaking, the Ruhr is now no longer a part of the German Republic, but an independent domain of Herr Stinnes and his associates, adequately fenced in by the bayonets of M. Poincaré.

BEYOND doubt the negotiations between the Stinnes-Wolff-Thiessen groups and the interests represented by M. Poincaré are of a financial and industrial character. Aside from arrangements for sharing the profits of this European Pittsburgh district, the shrewd negotiations are probably chiefly concerned with ways and means for getting the utmost out of the human beasts of labour in mine, forge and mill. There are rumours of plans for a ten-hour day and a profitable relaxation of the German labour laws. It is true that Article 427 of the sacred treaty of Versailles commits the signatory Governments "in principle" to the eight-hour day, and declares that labour is "not merely a commodity," but we suspect that that scrap of paper will not worry the negotiators overmuch. In Bavaria the labour-safeguards are said to have been cast pretty much into the discard, and it is expected that Herr Stresemann, as dictator of what is left of Germany, will have to placate the industrialists by decrees that will inaugurate a speeding-up process in industry. European labour in other countries seems to view these developments with wondrous placidity. Yet if Germany is transformed into a sweatshop, workers in other civilized countries will speedily find their own standards of life correspondingly lowered in accordance with inexorable economic laws. If the industries in which they are enlisted are to survive, these workers in all the industrial countries will find themselves compelled to spend their strength more lavishly for a wage competitive with the wage-standards in the industrial centre of the Continent.

THE Balkan correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* reports that "order" has been restored in Bulgaria through a series of horrible massacres by the Government's troops among the populations of the insurrectionary districts. "One hesitates to believe such things possible in Europe," comments the reporter, after listening to the harrowing tales of refugees. In news from various sources it now appears that the recent rising was the result of what the correspondent of the *Guardian* calls "the worst sort of White Terror," instituted after the militarist wing of the Government, under the leadership of General Lazarov, got control of the Cabinet. The militarist element in the Government organized informal bands of Black and Tans who descended on disaffected districts and tortured or murdered their political opponents, especially Communists, and, on occasion, burned their homes and ill-treated the women and children. These flying squadrons posed as Macedonian bandits, and the Government usually disavowed their actions officially. Their widespread depredations and cruelties turned the peasants towards the Communists, and thus the rebellion flared up.

WITH a public payroll that runs to nearly \$4,000,000,000 a year, and a staff of public servants that includes one-twelfth of all the Americans aged sixteen or better, and engaged in any gainful employment, the people of this country are certainly getting a full dose of "Stateism." The National Industrial Conference Board has abstracted these figures from the latest returns of the Census Bureau, and has asked if it is not about time to call a halt in the expansion of national, State and local activities of the official variety. According to statistics just published by the Civil Service Commission, the national salary-list has been cut from 918,000 on armistice-day to 549,000 last June; but it is still longer than it was at the beginning of the war by some 110,000 names. The rate of reduction

has steadily declined; the cut for 1922-23 amounted to only 12,000, and it is altogether unlikely that the 110,000 extra officials still hanging over from war-time will ever feel the blight of demobilization. With the prohibition-army on the make, the prospect is rather that the curve will tip up again this year.

In the activities of the several States, so Mr. William P. Helm, jun., tells us in the current issue of the *Budget*, there has not been even so much as a temporary retrenchment. If the returns made to the Bureau of the Census by fourteen States are typical of conditions throughout the country, then the cost of State-activities in general has increased four-fold since 1913, and two-fold since 1919. Is it any wonder, then, that the editor of the *New York World* already looks forward to the time when the existing proportion will be reversed, and eleven out of every twelve wage-earners will be in government employment? "This may bring the twelfth man who feeds and clothes them a few problems, but it will not be a patch on those accruing to the remaining eleven." They will simply have to fall back upon the un nourishing business of exploiting one another.

A CERTAIN section of the British press recently indulged in a curious attack on Premier Baldwin in connexion with the arrangements which he made when Chancellor of the Exchequer, for refunding the British war-debt to American taxpayers. The gist of the criticism was that Mr. Lloyd George, as Premier, had entered into negotiations with the American Government for the cancellation of the debt, and that if Mr. Baldwin had not acted so hastily, his good-natured Uncle Sam would have wiped the slate clean. It is true that before the ink was dry on the Treaty of Versailles, Mr. Lloyd George and other members of the British Government were importuning President Wilson to erase the obligation and dump the whole debt back on the shoulders of the American taxpayers. Mr. Wilson had conceded heaven and earth at Versailles, but this was pressing him a bit too far and he flatly refused. He wrote to Mr. Lloyd George that his Government "failed to perceive the logic in a suggestion in effect either that the United States should pay part of Germany's reparation-obligation, or that it should make a gratuity to the Allied Governments" to induce them to fix a reasonable indemnity.

THIS was a fair statement of the case, and there the matter ended. It may be that the revival of this defunct topic presages another attempt on the part of our cousinly debtors to repudiate their commitments. About the time this specious attack on Mr. Baldwin burst out, it was reported that certain American bankers were about to inaugurate a campaign for cancellation of the war-debts. These gentlemen have powerful resources of publicity, and are not without influence in Washington. By shifting ten billion dollars of European debts upon their solvent fellow-citizens they would do a shrewd stroke of business, for by so much would prospective European borrowers be a better risk for them. We doubt, however, that they can get very far in such an enterprise. Mr. Coolidge shows no disposition to take risks with the temper of the populace, and a growing element in Congress looks upon our late associates in strife with great disfavour; while behind them is a large body of irate taxpayers who would be likely to boil with rage at seeing their money plumped, in the form of a gratuity, into the armed camps of Europe. This would be the last straw; and even if, as seems probable, they will never get their billions back, it is a bit of comfort to see the score chalked up securely on the slate.



WE are glad to print the letter on the opium question which appears elsewhere in this issue, notwithstanding the previous publication of a similar letter elsewhere, because of our sympathy with the general cause to which the letter relates. We would be very glad to know more than we do know, however, about the commercial interests which are concerned in this anti-opium campaign. Dr. Gustave Ador, formerly President of the Swiss Confederation, said some things at the recent meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations that seem to us worth pondering. The failure of Switzerland to accept the proposed opium-convention of the League, Dr. Ador explained, was not due at all to a lack of sympathy with the movement to suppress the improper use of drugs, but to the unwillingness of the Federal council to commit itself to a programme which might injure an important Swiss industry (that of the manufacture of pharmaceutical preparations) until it could learn just what such commitment involved. Our calamitous experience with prohibition as an alleged moral reform, and the working-understanding which apparently exists in certain quarters between pharmacists and physicians to limit the sale of certain pharmaceutical preparations to persons only who have prescriptions, suggests the possibility of a commercial and professional interest in the anti-narcotic agitation which ought at least to be made entirely clear.

ONE of the fine things about a lynching, or a plain ordinary hanging, is that the decision once made does not have to be reconsidered. The papers are telling us now that a Negro convict, ill and in the fear of death, has accused another Negro of the crime of which the young Jew, Leo Frank, was convicted eight years ago, and for which he was lynched by certain impatient citizens of Georgia. If the Negro now accused is still at large, the white folks down Georgia way will know what to do about it. They have the habit, as is illustrated by the story of the Irish Catholic prize-fighter who recently went down to Columbus, Georgia, in company with his Jewish manager, to fight a local favourite son. The Irish performer was on the point of refusing to perform, for reasons which may or may not have been adequate, when a crowd of Georgians led the manager out in front of the town-hall, and told him that if his man didn't fight, and fight fair, both man and manager would be asked to decorate one of Georgia's beautiful trees. This is the story as related in the *New York Herald*, and no doubt it will inspire the Negro journalists of the country to say once more that the lynching-habit, once well-established, will not always confine its attentions to members of the Negro race.

WE were pleased to discover in the *New York Times*, for 7 October, an article which confirms the opinion often put forward in this paper, that the American people will receive the best in the arts quite as readily as the worst. We have made no high claim for the public's discrimination, but we have already remarked that the audiences at our metropolitan vaudeville houses and moving-picture theatres seem quite as well pleased with the snatches of grand-opera and the good instrumental music occasionally offered them, as with the trash that makes up the routine fare. The article in the *Times* makes a similar report of rural audiences which, it appears, turned out in force last summer to hear the performance of "Faust" in the tents of the Redpath Chautauqua Bureau. According to our informant, the attendance amounted to 100,000, and the auditors uniformly received the music with enthusiasm. No doubt the opera was badly done, but the same thing precisely must be said of most of the performances in the very countries where

the opera is most popular—in France and in Italy, for example. The point is that the Italian or the Frenchman with his opera, poorly rendered as it often is, is better off than the American with his perfect "Perils of Pauline." These perils we have in plenty, but not because we as a nation have a positive preference for them; we have rather, as a rule, the priceless defect of an indiscriminate taste that still awaits the educator.

THE process of whipping the Protestant Churches of the country into line for the support of political propaganda goes on apace. Mr. Anderson, of Anti-Saloon League fame, burst into the news a little while ago with another reminder of his "5000 Protestant Churches," all demanding the enforcement of prohibition; and an organization of churches to strengthen the hands of the Government in continuing this particular scandal has also been reported. Now comes the National Council for Prevention of War, backed by the Federal Council of Churches and the World Alliance for International Friendship, with an announcement of World Court Week, 5-11 November. "This Commission of the Federal Council," the statement declares, "believes that the churches heartily approve of American membership in the World Court, and earnestly desire the Senate to accept, without mutilation or substantial modification," Mr. Harding's proposals of 24 February. If the Federal Council or its commission have any evidence of any general interest in this country in a World Court, let alone any active wish to see the United States associated with such a body, they have a secret which no one else has been able to discover. The ceremonies will come off, of course, and the usual cut-and-dried resolutions will be adopted; then it will be in order to get up another "week" for something else. Meantime, we venture to guess, the United States will stay out of the Court.

It would now seem to be in order to put the Rt. Rev. William Lawrence, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Massachusetts, on trial for heresy. In an address at Boston a few days ago, on the thirtieth anniversary of his consecration, he is reported to have affirmed that belief in the Virgin Birth has nothing to do with belief in the incarnation, and that one who holds to the latter and rejects the former may continue to recite the creed in all sincerity. As the Apostles' Creed, to which the bishop presumably referred, appears to be quite as explicit regarding the birth of Jesus as about his kinship with God, it is a bit difficult to see how one of these assertions can be taken and the other left. We hope that the proper authorities of the Massachusetts diocese will not be deterred from asking for an explanation because of the exalted rank of the dissenter. For statements no more revolutionary than that of Bishop Lawrence, more than one clergyman has been made to suffer; and what is sauce for the goose ought to be sauce for the gander. A first-class heresy trial, with a bishop as the central figure, would give the Protestant Episcopal body a chance to make clear precisely what it is that a member of that communion, be he bishop, priest or layman, is under obligation to believe.

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## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

### THE FREE TRADE LEAGUE.

MR. COOLIDGE's letter to the Western Tariff Association was characteristically noncommittal. He went so far as to remark that there has never been a period in the country's history when so little of sectional interest entered into the consideration of the tariff. This is probably true. He added that "the obvious necessity for maintaining a proper measure of protection to American industry and production in the face of chaotic industrial conditions following the war has unquestionably brought us nearer to a national solidarity on this issue." This also is perhaps true in point of fact, though Mr. Coolidge's implications are extremely doubtful. We regarded it as a good sign that there was hardly any pretence in Congress that the Fordney-McCumber bill was anything but a straight steal. It was perceived that under that bill the interests affected could count on at least three or four years of first-rate plunder before pressure enough could be brought to bear to get its iniquitous provisions modified or repealed; so all hands rushed forward to grab what they could without any particular care for hoodwinking the public about what they were doing. The public was thinking about other matters, and "American industry and production" was alive to its chance. Now, as the public contemplates the obstinate reluctance of prices to decline, as it considers the enormous "spread" between the cost of production of a great number of commodities and the retail price of those commodities, and as it looks into other matters similarly affecting its purchasing power, it is beginning to show signs of coming to its senses.

Our object, therefore, in writing these lines is to address a few words of exhortation to the Free-Trade League. We have not heard much of that organization lately, but we think it is still in existence, and we suggest respectfully that now is the time for it to come to the front with all the backing it can muster, both of money and ability, and undertake a strictly non-political, non-partisan campaign of education devoted to showing throughout the country the effect of protection up-to-date. If the League attempts to carry its campaign into politics, we think that very little can be expected from it; but if it is content to leave politics aside and simply spread the light of information about the actual workings of the protective principle, it will find the time ripe, we believe, for a great success; and it will find also that when the public once gets into its head what is happening the world over as the result of exorbitant post-war tariffs, there will be little trouble about getting this knowledge translated into appropriate action.

Europe is better known to our public now than it used to be, and its condition commands more attention, because we are increasingly aware that we have a financial interest in its prosperity. Possibly, therefore, this campaign might begin with a survey of fiscal conditions in Europe; in particular, perhaps, with the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. Before the war this empire, ramshackle as it was and made up of all sorts of heterogeneous populations, was a huge area of internal free trade, and for that reason more than any other it hung together. Before the war, too, influential men of a liberal type in the neighbouring Danube States, perceiving that a workable solidarity was thus effected among peoples as diverse as Bosnians, Germans of Bohemia, Magyars, inhabitants of Herzegovina, Czechs and the like, were hard at work on the idea of

a Balkan League which should apply the same solvent of internal free trade in their hotbed of nationalisms. Then the war came, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken up and various small States erected out of its remains; and the first thing that each of these new States did was to erect around itself a tariff-barrier as high as Haman's gallows, and the second thing it did was, logically, to order up the finest kind of modern army!

What is the result? Instead of one great area of internal free trade in Central Europe, there is now none much more than big enough wherein to swing a cat by the tail. Hungary, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, all are surrounded by tariff-walls of their own; and the neighbouring Danube States, so far from the pre-war notion of forming themselves into a free-trade area through an economic league, are all more than ever closely huddled behind their own economic barriers. Commerce, instead of making its way over one, two or three of these obstacles, has to reckon with a dozen; and the effect of this on prices, on production, on the volume of commerce and on purchasing power, will make a fine instructive parable for the Free Trade League to set forth to Americans, with appropriate parallel references to their own experience under a similar post-war policy.

If now, as we suspect, Great Britain is endeavouring to re-form the British Empire into an economic league based on the closest possible approximation to internal free trade, the League can make another story, very interesting indeed to Americans, out of prognosticating the economic consequences that will accrue to our industry and commerce from the carrying out of such a plan. If the British colonies and overseas dominions can be persuaded into doing what is best for themselves and going in with the mother country on a basis of reciprocal free trade, then Mr. Lloyd George is right and the British Empire is the only league of nations worth thinking about; and it will keep competing nations busy thinking about it—thinking carefully and prayerfully—for some time to come. The American public will stand a great deal of explicitness on this point. Let it be shown the geographical distribution of the component parts of the British Empire, and how advantageously several of them abut upon American territory and American markets, actual and potential, and what their resources are, and how effectively those resources can be supplemented from the general resources of the Empire under a system of free exchange, and we think our people may be trusted to find the prospect profoundly interesting.

Interesting, instructive and highly serious as all these economic considerations are, however, we hope that the Free Trade League will base its direct appeal to the American people on the ground of natural right; for this is, after all, the only appeal that in the long run will get an adequate response and enlist an effective allegiance. It is a commonplace to speak of the pocket-nerve as the most sensitive filament in the body politic, but the fact is that human beings in the mass have always risen to the appeal of manhood rather than to the appeal to greed or even the appeal to well-being. Politicians know this trait in mankind; in making wars, for instance, they are aware that if they did not disguise their corrupt purposes under some nobly moral pretext, people would not support them. "Give me liberty or give me death!" cried Patrick Henry, and the colonists heard and heeded. Let the Free Trade League take the lead in demanding freedom of trade because freedom of trade is an essential part of that liberty with which, according to the



Declaration of Independence, the Creator has endowed us as an inalienable right. Let the appeal be backed up and substantiated by all the economic arguments available; but let it be remembered that the really powerful and effective appeal is always to the sense of justice.

### MR. GOMPERS IN CONVENTION.

THE annual convention of the American Federation of Labour has met and adjourned without any material contribution to the illumination of the American people. In temper the convention was fully as conservative as the recent convocation of American bankers, and it was not redeemed, as was the meeting of the bankers, by an occasional preoccupation with matters of broad economic significance.

The gathering revealed Mr. Samuel Gompers and his hierarchy more firmly entrenched than ever. The sporadic insurgencies of recent conventions were absent this year, and no group of delegates attempted seriously to buck the well-oiled steam-roller. Under the rigid guidance of its presidential perennial the Federation confined itself largely to negatives. It registered disapproval of such diverse phenomena as the Volstead law, the Ku Klux Klan, the Government of Venezuela, the Federated Press, the I. W. W. (denounced as a scab-organization financed by the employers), American communist brethren, the London *Daily Herald*, organ of the British Labour party (which Mr. Gompers declared disseminated propaganda from the poison pens of Moscow); recognition of Russia, affiliation with the anti-communist trade union international, and an American Labour party. On the other hand, the delegates veered enthusiastically into a constructive policy favouring beer and light wines.

The persistent disinclination of Mr. Gompers and his lieutenants to venture into the *terra incognita* of a labour-party is readily understandable. A labour party in which their followers were enlisted would increase to an indeterminate degree their responsibilities and worries, without yielding them any tangible reward in power or security. At present they have a most successful political preserve of their own in which they enjoy a virtual monopoly of preferment. The privileges and emoluments of office do not have to be shared between contending groups, as is the case in the larger field of governmental politics; and hence the place-holders are not subjected to periodical intervals of unemployment, like the Democratic and Republican brethren in the larger fields. As things stand, the strings of the labour-movement are all firmly in the hands of Mr. Gompers and his friends; but it might happen that a labour party would get out of hand, and certain more blatant demagogues, or even some relentless economist, might arise to capture the imagination of the rank and file and obscure the Gompersian fame. Under the present comfortable circumstances the goose hangs high for the Old Guard, and they are not tempted to risk a change.

Now that the British Labour party is such a flourishing concern, thoughtful members of the American rank and file in increasing numbers are betraying a desire to establish a respectable political party of their own. Possibly the growth of this sentiment accounts for the menagerie of terrors which Mr. Gompers and his fellow office-holders trotted out for the diversion of the delegates. Of these Mr. Gompers's pet mouse, the Red Menace, held the centre of the stage most of the time, while the orators of the Old Guard belaboured it without mercy. One had the impression that these

patriotic stalwarts were losing sleep o' nights worrying about how to save our institutions from overthrow at the hands of Mr. W. Z. Foster and other minions of the Evil One. Mr. George P. West, in the *New York Leader*, reported that the fraternal delegates from the British Trades Union Congress were greatly amazed at all this romantic fury and that they were further astonished when a lone communist delegate from Butte was stricken from the rolls and hurled into the outer darkness. Communist delegates are permitted to sit in British Labour congresses, but in this land of the free they must not contaminate Mr. Gompers's parties. If the British delegates were really bewildered by this circus-stunt, they took appearances too seriously. The dramatic expulsion advertised the communist element in the labour-movement beyond its numerical deserts, but it also served to occupy the delegates amiably and unprofitably for a considerable period, and gave Mr. Gompers a strategic bargaining-point for his diplomatic manoeuvres with governmental and industrial leaders.

Yet a labour-movement can not live by red-herrings alone. The membership of the Federation has decreased by a million from the high-water mark of a few years back, and this year's roll showed a shrinkage of 250,000 names from that of 1922. Probably few of the delegates paid much attention to the parting words of the outlawed communist brother before he vanished into the great open spaces, but none the less the words had a prophetic sting. "Labour in this country is pitifully weak," he reminded them. "Only about one-seventh of the workers are organized. Yet you strut and swank here as if it were the greatest movement in the world. Not one single charter for a great new group of workers is reported in the annual report of your executive council."

### AN IMPERIAL PEEP-SHOW.

Two of the most striking features of the international situation to-day are the desperate condition of British trade with the Continent and the proportionately desperate attempt of the Britishers to make good within the Empire the losses sustained in the European field. England has a long hard winter ahead, if the *London Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, weekly editions, have taken an accurate measure of the situation. The descending curve of unemployment has already flattened out and turned sharply up again, as it did at this time last year. In the space of seven days, toward the end of August, the increase in the number of men out of work amounted to 20,000, and it is feared that the winter's total will run up to 2,000,000. Trade is in a bad way, and the depression is more striking in current order-books and market-reports than in records of past performance. "There is scarcely a trade-route which does not report a condition of stagnation that is without precedent in the memory of men whose lives have been spent in the freight-market."

The Continental nations are not only unable to buy British goods; the depreciation of the currencies, and the consequent lag of rising wages behind more rapidly rising prices, has enabled the Continent to produce at a very low commodity-cost, and has thus given an unnatural stimulus to the export-trade of England's competitors. Now "for the first time in the history of the woollen trade," it is "possible for France to offer cloth in Yorkshire appreciably below the British cost of production," and the payment of war-debts and reparations in goods and services may bring still further hardship to British industry. Such is the situation, as we piece it together from items in the *Guardian* and the



*Times*; and no wonder the editor of the latter paper approves the steps that his Government has taken towards the cancellation of the inter-Allied debt, and the restriction of reparations-payments to supplementary goods and services which the country is unable to produce, and can not afford to purchase.

As the outward and visible sign of the attempt of British men of business to retrieve within the Empire their losses on the continent of Europe, the buildings of the British Empire Exhibition are rising now near London. One of the many schemes for imperial development that have cropped out since the war, the Exhibition will be a huge affair, "a symbol of the extent, the fertility, the possibilities of the greatest Empire that the human race has ever seen." This conglomerate of territories and peoples includes a population of 450 million and an area 150 times the size of Great Britain. "Within the Empire," says the *London Times*, "there is food and work and room and wealth in plenty"; but let us stop for a moment to inquire how the process of empire-development has affected one particular section of this rich domain.

On the subject of the British colony of Kenya, in eastern Africa, we have already had a thing or two to say. The population of this colony is composed of 2,500,000 native blacks, 23,000 Indians, 10,000 Arabs, and 9600 Europeans (not 96,000 as we said inadvertently in our issue of 19 September). According to the recent decision of the British Colonial Office, the representation of the races in the colonial Legislative Council is to be counter-proportional to their numerical strength; the Europeans are to hold a permanent majority, the Negroes will have one lone member nominated by higher authority, and the Indians and Arabs will fall somewhere between.

Young India reports that the Government thumb-prints the natives of Kenya for purposes of record, taxes them to the amount of one-third of their wages, and punishes non-payment with fines, floggings and prison-terms. *Navayuga*, another Indian journal, declares that the new decision of the Colonial Office provides for the restriction of immigration of Indians and others into Kenya, and for the segregation of races in the highlands, where the Europeans have settled. "The Indian is considered as the helot of the Empire," says *Navayuga*, in a cover-spread that urges the people of India to extend the non-coöperative movement, and to boycott the British councils. It appears, then, that the attempt to recoup the fortunes of England within the Empire is being made somewhat at the cost of the lesser breeds without the law, and it is also apparent that the job is not going forward as smoothly as the construction-work on the exhibit-halls at Wembley Park.

### THE PRICE OF WHISKY.

It is time for the attention of the Administration to be called to the extraordinary state of the retail whisky-trade. As everybody knows, the trade has had to contend during the past few years with a discouraging succession of ups and downs. The enactment by Congress of the Volstead law, naturally regarded by a considerable section of the public as indicative of an intention on the part of the Government to enforce with some rigour the obnoxious Prohibitory Amendment, occasioned a good deal of nervousness in the market, and led a number of producers and distributors of whisky to make plans for going out of business. The moment chosen for the enactment of this law was peculiarly unfortunate both for dealers in whisky and for the consuming public. World-stocks of whisky

were unprecedentedly low at the close of the war, largely because of the heavy demand for whisky for propaganda and other military purposes; and at the close of the war it was not possible, in view of the grain-shortage and the necessity of conserving the food-supply, promptly to replenish the depleted stocks in Great Britain and on the Continent. On the other hand, the ill-advised course of the Government in impeding the distribution of warehouse-stocks, and even destroying a portion of them, created a scarcity of seasoned whisky in the home market just at a time when foreign supplies were at a low ebb.

The immediate effect of these various circumstances upon the retail trade, the only branch of the trade with which the individual consumer is much concerned, was twofold. The market was flooded with poor whisky, and retail-prices for whisky of all grades rose to extravagant figures. The prices which commonly prevailed for even the most ordinary brands bore with especial hardship upon the clergy, whose salaries are in most cases notoriously small, and upon the wage-earning classes, whose noble sacrifices in the great struggle which made the world safe for democracy were ill-rewarded by this general lowering of quality and enhancement of price of one of the commonest necessities of life. What made the situation the more irritating was the extravagant charges of one kind or another with which the shifting policy of the Government burdened the whisky-trade. The old internal-revenue and license charges which the liquor-industry as a whole had long been required to bear were undoubtedly heavy, but they were light in comparison with the veritable impositions which Government officials, Federal, State and local, were allowed to exact, and which inevitably reacted upon the retail-price. In this particular respect, we regret to say, there has been little sign of improvement. When a consignment of whisky imported from abroad (and the disordered state of the domestic industry has for some time made foreign supplies the chief reliance) must wait for several days outside the three-mile limit before it is allowed to enter territorial waters, and must then pay a substantial toll to the revenue-boat that convoys it to the wharf, and further tolls to the wharf-officials, the police, transportation-agents and warehouse-keepers, it is no wonder that the retail-price to the ultimate consumer should sometimes reach the all-but-prohibitive figure of a dollar a drink.

Any evidence of a return to a more reasonable scale of prices, accordingly, is to be welcomed. We are gratified to observe, from a price-list lately published in the *New York Herald*, that Scotch whisky of average quality has declined in price from \$70-\$90 per case last year to \$45 this year, and Scotch whisky of superior quality from \$85-\$120 per case to \$50-\$70. This is a very considerable drop, and it will undoubtedly help to relieve a situation which was becoming badly strained. It is only a mitigation of the evil, however. Everybody knows that the average man or woman in this country does not buy whisky by the case, but by the drink or at most by the bottle; and even if the retailer exacts only a normal profit for handling his goods, Scotch whisky at \$45 the case is almost certain to work out to the consumer at \$5 the bottle at least, which means fifty cents a long drink; and fifty cents for one drink of only an average grade of Scotch whisky is too much. We invite the earnest attention of the Government to this deplorable situation. If the Government would cease its spasmodic efforts to enforce a law which the country regards as obsolete, and would allow the accumulated stocks of



domestic whisky to enter the market in the usual way, competition would soon bring prices down to a normal level and free consumers from the exactions of a foreign monopoly. We can hardly pride ourselves upon our independence as a nation, so long as our Government compels us to get our whisky from Great Britain. Millions for defence if defence be necessary; but not even a cent a drink for tribute.

## MISCELLANY.

I WAS very much taken with what the editors of the *Freeman* had to say recently about superfluous books and how to dispose of them. Unfortunately, some of the most valuable books remain for a long time little known. I have in mind one that I regard as highly valuable, and interesting to the point of fascination; and yet I could not tell anyone how to go about obtaining a copy. I refer to a volume of selections from the letters and speeches of the late Mayor Gaynor, put together by some of Mr. Gaynor's associates in the City Hall, and privately printed. If I wished to impress children or young people with the spirit as well as the philosophical theory of sound Americanism, I would use this volume as a textbook. If thoughtful adults, also, wish to realize how far the country has diverged from its course in the past decade, this book will bring the facts before them more sharply than any other that I know. It really passes one's comprehension that such utterances could have been put out by any man in American public life as late as ten years ago.

It is really lamentable that in this day of insignificant and moderately significant biographies, Mr. Gaynor should not have been made the subject of adequate biographical notice. It is a task for a first-rate man of letters who is also something of a philosopher and a good deal of a student of history—rather a rare combination, but none other, I think, is quite capable of realizing, on the strength of his scanty and rather special literary remains, what a great man Mr. Gaynor was. His actual achievements are perhaps not worth much more space than is given them in the introduction to the little volume that I speak of; but his philosophy, his literary character, his conception of American institutions, his views of the function of a public servant under a democracy—all these are susceptible of very extended, very striking and extremely profitable development. In my judgment, there has not been a figure in our public life since Mr. Jefferson about whom so much of lasting value might be written.

PROFESSOR GOODSPEED, of the University of Chicago, has just completed his task of modernizing the New Testament. I wish I might see more clearly the purpose of these revisions. For whom are they intended, and what is the effect that they are supposed to produce? I have looked over portions of Mr. Goodspeed's version, though rather casually, and I confess I can not imagine the kind of reader that he had in mind when he produced it. If he wrote in the interest of science, one must say that the Revised Version is probably better than Mr. Goodspeed's and that Mr. Goodspeed's closer approach to the vernacular is of no particular advantage. If he wrote in the interest of religion, his version is a lamentable failure; for by far the greater part of the force of religion lies in its poetry, and Mr. Goodspeed has simply vulgarized all the prepossessing and animating poetic charm out of his text. The science of the Bible and of its textual criticism is, for the purposes of religion, practically negligible. Religion is most furthered by *enjoyment* of the Bible; and this is hampered and retarded by reading the Bible in a version devoid of poetic charm and poetic power.

To show how frail and evanescent is the charm of poetry, let me put a couple of renderings side by side. In the Sermon on the Mount, the King James Version has this:

Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Mr. Goodspeed's version renders this passage thus:

Do people pick grapes off thorns or figs off thistles? Just so any sound tree bears good fruit, but a poor tree bears bad fruit. No sound tree can bear bad fruit, and no poor tree can bear good fruit. Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and burned. So you can tell them by their fruit.

The charm is departed. What gain, then, is made by the use of the vernacular? Is it in clarity, precision, appositeness? I think the King James Version stands comparison perfectly with Mr. Goodspeed's in these respects, both here and wherever I have chanced to bring the two together.

I HAVE not yet girded myself up to see many plays of the new crop. What few I have seen are such as deal with the morals of sex, and I therefore feel that my weekly reflections are proceeding from a mind that needs disinfection; notwithstanding it was by luck and not management that I fell in with that kind of play. How good it would be if some play-writer would become an outright realist in these matters, instead of for ever contenting himself with expounding factitious and superficial moralities in a routine and superficial way! Practically nothing that the modern drama, from Ibsen down to Brieux, has done in portraying the fate of the light-o'-love, ever made me feel that his or her fate was a very serious one or much to be considered, one way or the other. There would need to be better reasons than any to be found in "Ghosts" or "Damaged Goods," for instance, to make an intelligent person think twice about larking to the top of his desire. These appeals to the passion of fear are based on a long chance; it is a hundred to one, or better, that their Nemesis will not arrive; and every intelligent person knows it.

THERE is a sound reason, a good reason, against looseness and philandering, and its dramatic possibilities are so attractive that one wonders why some dramatist does not take them up and explore them. One feels with some impatience that if play-writers must occupy themselves with the dreadful consequences of this kind of dissipation, they ought to have a good reason behind them instead of continually trying to make so much of bad ones. This reason is found in the peculiar, inevitable, and as far as I know inexplicable subjective change produced in the person who indulges to any degree, even the slightest and apparently most insignificant, in these irregularities. The distaste for philandering, the resentfulness of it that obtains especially between congenial and well-mated persons, is based upon a true and salutary instinct. This instinct is usually interpreted, unfortunately, both in life and in fiction, as a coarse and self-defeating jealousy. The interpretation is vulgarizing and retarding, but the instinct itself is sound, for this Nemesis never fails to arrive promptly and exact its full pay by quietly, subtly but inexorably *taking the edge off* (I do not know how to put it better) those relations in which one is really happiest, and in which one is really all the time aware that one is happiest. Nothing is quite the same afterwards, for oneself is not quite the same.



It is rather an odd thing that the play-writers, who are presumably somewhat akin to the poets, should be so far behind the poets in finding this out, and that they should prefer to follow the specious and superficial moralities of the sociologists, the theologians, the National Purity League and Mr. Sumner. The poets have always known where the sound moralities of this matter lay and have expressed it clearly. Burns, for example, looks at the superficial moralities only to pass them by—

I waive the quantum o' the sin,  
The hazard o' concealin'—

yes, for those are at most uncertain and usually at some rate or other to be gotten over; instinct does not support them as true moralities. He then lays his finger upon the actual moralities, aware, like a true poet, that he has human instinct and experience solidly with him—

But och! it hardens a' within  
And petrifies the feelin'.

Nothing could express better the retaliatory work of this Nemesis—it *petrifies feeling*. Now, what could be better for dramatic purposes than to trace and record, in a perfectly objective way, the process of this petrification of feeling? Turgenev did this in two of his novels; and a good playwright could do it on the stage in a way that would be no more spectacular than the intimate operations of nature ever are, but would be stupendous and grand—grand with the grandeur of Greek tragedy. It is odd, too, that the theologians have been so slow to discern the real penalty which nature invariably exacts from this form of error, when it is so clearly shown by one of their best-known poets. The first few chapters of the Book of Proverbs are an untouched mine for the dramatist. Little enough does Solomon say about the superficial moralities in his wonderful dramatic dissertation upon what he calls "the strange woman"; he would make dull reading for Mr. Sumner and the National Purity League; but, like Burns, with a true poetic instinct he touches the fundamental moralities when he says that *none who go unto her return again*. That is precisely what happens, and happens always. What returns is salvage, sometimes more, sometimes less; but the spirit never returns entire, as it was before.

Who now studies physiognomy in a practical way or for practical purposes? I well remember what a hold Lavater's treatise had on me as a boy, and I believe that if more people regarded the human face as an index, a great many humbugs and impositions would be discouraged. I was set thinking in this vein the other day, by leafing over an illustrated magazine which happened to show a great many faces of representative men. There was a group of Mr. Coolidge and his Cabinet, some representative industrialists, two or three labour-leaders, and a few politicians who were picked out, or had picked themselves, as candidates for some office or other. What faces! If I belonged to a labour-union, I would not let my destinies remain in the hands of men who looked like that if I could help it. If the American people knew the rudiments of reading faces, it were incredible that Mr. Coolidge and his Cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Mellon, would ever permit their pictures to be published. One look at the newspaper-pictures of Mr. Lloyd George should be enough for anybody. The work of the cartoonists, especially that of Mr. Briggs and Mr. Webster, ought to give us an inkling of the importance of physiognomy, but somehow the fine points of their caricature seem to go over our heads.

JOURNEYMAN.

## HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL.

HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL has a reputation outside Austria and Germany chiefly for a few dramas on classical themes treated in the modern spirit; but in intelligent circles in these countries he is still regarded as a writer who, however talented his later works may be, has never equalled again a few poems and small dramas which he had written already in his teens, and which appeared as early as 1892, more than thirty years ago. With this judgment a critic must agree, for if these works are a very peculiar, indeed a unique kind of poetry, they are yet poetry greater probably than any that has been written in Europe since. In Germany, a little unjustly, Hofmannsthal's reputation has been overshadowed by that of Stephan George, a poet superficially of the same school, but really almost of a different species. Both of them, on account of the deliberate beauty of their use of words, a deliberation which sometimes gives an impression of affectation, were early classed as æsthetic poets, and by critics deliberately Teutonic, as decadent; but in the æstheticism which nourished George's genius, Hofmannsthal's became less vigorous, less individual, although he was impelled by his devotion to form to give way to it. They were, indeed, fated to receive their genius from nature in different ways. At his best Hofmannsthal was so spontaneous, so given up to a passive obedience to the inspiration of the moment that the deliberate pursuit of a severely thought-out form of poetry was bound to be injurious to his genius. Moreover, at the very beginning he was in full possession of a style of almost faultless beauty; and the fullness of satisfaction which one derives from his early poetry is the result of the fusion of that with a vision of life, fresh, spontaneous; the vision of a boy passing into youth rather than of a youth. George, too, started with a completely finished style, a style which, attempted in a language seldom before considered amenable to rigid form, gives one a stronger sense of finish than one can get even in tongues like French and Italian, where it comes naturally and as if the genius of the race dictated it. But, possessing this style, George never attained that union of spontaneity and form which makes Hofmannsthal's early lyrics unique.

In writing of Hofmannsthal one can not avoid making an attempt to discover why the genius which burned so purely, so entirely by its own light, in his youth, should later have become more and more overlaid with talent, and almost negated by it. A nemesis has sometimes followed precocity of genius, and sometimes not; but in reading Hofmannsthal's early poems, one feels that it was bound to follow his. The astonishing thing in the early poems of Hofmannsthal, is that nothing is expressed there tentatively. Everything is complete with a formidable artistic ripeness, as if in reaching youth the poet had attained maturity; a lovely maturity derived not from experience, as maturity so almost invariably is, but from a clear and beautiful imagination whose power laid a chill upon him when he was in the first freshness of his life. This is the unique quality of these poems: an objectivity sad and resigned which is like the objectivity of no other poet, because it is that not of manhood, but of boyhood and youth. Hofmannsthal's *Sturm und Drang* was frozen immediately into calm form and objective vision; he passed over without touching it the phase which most of the poets of his race have experienced before they gained a clear vision of life.

The poetry of his youth falls into three divisions: lyrics pure and simple, prologues, and "*kleinen*



*Dramen.*" It is in the first of these alone that this amazing maturity of genius is seen; in the prologues and the dramas, delightful as these are, there is the imperfection of boyhood; an imperfection, however, shot through with grace, and even in its blunders without a trace of awkwardness. "The Death of Titian," published in 1892, but written, one guesses, sometime earlier, probably when the author was sixteen, is full of "aestheticism," with an almost waxy softness of line, with a dreamy and passive resignation to the flow of images through the poet's brain, and with a great deal of the unreality and borrowed enthusiasm of youth. It is not one of Hofmannsthal's best works; but "Death and the Fool," published in the following year, showed a great advance. In it, although one feels that a boy is writing drama, the drama is real; the author is concerned with truths of human character and fate, and the beauty of the images, still a little fragile, brings life before us with intense vividness and purity. The theme is very simple, even banal; but the naïve and certain grasp of human longing and debasement makes the drama extraordinary. The vision throughout is that of one who has not learned but who has seen, and in seeing has suffered purely, and without the compensation which adult experience brings with it. Life in this play, indeed, is purely a spectacle; seen by one who has not yet decisively crossed its frontiers, but seen with a touch of clear appraisement, the judgment of one who, seeing life in advance, knows that he must leave childhood for something worse than itself. This appraisement of life—for life we call the process which begins with sex and an occupation—is made not only from a point outside life, but, what gives it its final poignancy, a point before life. There is in it a sense of indignity, a feeling that in growing up one does not gain very much, and that one loses a great deal; one's clearness of vision, and innocence buried under gross experiences. It is easy to see the one-sidedness of an attitude such as this; and certain minds thoroughly satisfied with life will find it pathetic, if not odd. Nevertheless it contains a truth which writers so diverse as Wordsworth and Baudelaire have felt, and felt profoundly. And the singleness with which Hofmannsthal felt it, not like Wordsworth and Baudelaire, on recollection of boyhood, but out of boyhood itself, gives his poetry that quality which is unlike anything else in literature.

It is in his lyrics, however, that this vision of life is most solidly conveyed; and, beautiful as "Death and the Fool" is, these contain his ripest work. For the creation of tragedy, experience of life on a grand scale is, one feels, necessary; for tragedy is not a spectacle merely, but rather a statement and counter-statement of life; and in order to set the passions in art, it is obvious that one must have passed through and over them. But Hofmannsthal's early lyrics were inspired not by a knowledge of life as it is experienced by men, but by the spectacle of life's processes, by the perception that so and so things happen, that children grow up, become something different, and die, that some men are born to glory and others to poverty; above all, that all things pass, and having passed, can never be recaptured; and in these poems he was without a trace of uncertainty. They were evoked almost entirely by the unaccountable and dreadful development of life, its apparently unjust diversity of fortunes, its end in death and its incomprehensibility while it lasts; and this process, seen so entirely from the outside, and before he was surprised by it into the normal acceptance of adult life, was set down with a clearness which experience would have con-

fused. Rarely has life been seen so purely from the outside, and at the same time with such passion. The "Ballade des Ausseren Lebens," Hofmannsthal's greatest short poem, and one of the greatest in the German language, expresses all the emotion which the incomprehensibility of life awoke in him. I have attempted a rough rendering, in the metre, but without the sequence of rhymes, of the original:

And children grow up tall with darkling eyes  
Which know of nothing, they grow up and die,  
And all men go regardless on their way.

And the sweet fruits come out upon the trees,  
And fall at night like death-struck birds below,  
And lie a little time, and rot away.

And always wind blows, and for ever more  
We learn things, and we utter many words,  
And smell desire and weariness of flesh.

And roads run through the grass, and different places  
Are here and there with torches, trees and pools,  
And threatening, and deathly withered up.

For what were these uplifted there? and like  
Each other never? and so countless many?  
What alternates this laughing, weeping, paling?

What blessing does it bring us, all this play?  
Us who are great and yet for ever lonely?  
Who, wandering ever, seek not any goal?

What boots it to have seen all these so often?  
But yet the man says much who murmurs 'Evening,'  
A word from which deep meaning and sorrow run  
Like heavy honey from the hollow comb.

But how simple and perfect that is in the original no translation can show. It has the naïve accent of childhood and at the same time a steadfastness of vision which we are accustomed to regard as the fruit of a long and strict literary discipline. The form is so beautiful, so capable of giving pleasure in itself, that the poem will delight even those who can not enter into its mood, that mood which nevertheless gives it its originality and poignancy. But almost as beautiful, and still more astonishing as the production of a youth, is the poem in free rhythm beginning "*Manche freilich*":

Many truly must perish down below there  
Where the heavy oars of the ship are driven;  
Others dwell aloft at the helm,  
Know the birds' flight and the countries of stars.

Many lie for ever with heavy limbs  
Beside the dark roots of chaotic life;  
For others are seats prepared  
Beside the sibyls, the great queens,  
And there they sit as if at home  
With careless heads and carefree hands.

But a shadow falls from that life down  
Upon the other life below,  
And the easy and the heavy  
Are as air and earth mingled:

The weariness of clean forgotten peoples  
Can I not fling from my eyelids,  
Nor protect my shuddering spirit  
From the silent falling of distant stars.

Many fates are woven near mine,  
Through each other they weave the pattern,  
But my part is greater than this life's  
Slender flame and narrow lyre.

There are poems, too, in which the poet wavers on the edge of manhood, and feels the visions of his child-



hood slipping away from him and behind him, never to be recaptured except in those moments which seem to come by a chance of some other world, and which he found once at any rate in love, as one may guess from the poem beginning "*Dein Antlitz*." They did not always come, however. In "*Erlebnis*" he tells how at one moment he awoke to life. "A nameless homesickness wept voicelessly in my soul then," he writes; "wept for all existence"—

As a man weeps, when on a splendid ship,  
With yellow giant sails in the still evening  
On dark blue waters onward to the town,  
His native town, soundless he glides. He sees  
The lanes, he hears the fountains louden, smells  
The scent of lilac bushes, sees himself,  
A child, stand on the shore with childish eyes,  
That, filled with anguish, wish to weep, he sees  
Through the open window light within his room—  
But the great galleon takes him on and past,  
Noiselessly gliding over dark blue waves,  
With yellow, strange-shaped and gigantic sails.

For such simplicity of regret, such single-thoughted brooding over great things lost in the wastes of past time, one has to go back to Walther von der Vogelweide's great "*Elegie*." There is, indeed, a striking resemblance between the early Hofmannsthal and the Walther of the "*Elegie*," the later poet recapturing by his youth some of the simplicity of an earlier time. But in his regret for the passing of childhood Hofmannsthal is indeed in the great tradition of German poetry, of Goethe in some of his moods, of Heine, Hölderlin and Rückert; for nothing is more German than regret, and out of nothing has German poetry fashioned a more singular beauty. It is memory of childhood which give their atmosphere to Walther von der Vogelweide's "*Elegie*," Goethe's "*Kennst du das Land*" and Rückert's "*Aus der Jugendzeit*," and scores of lyrics by Hölderlin and Heine.

It is hard to say why the mood of unavailing regret should produce poetry which, when we read it, we recognize to be great. It is a question, however, which the study of Hofmannsthal invites, for his early poetry is chiefly of that kind. To brood over those rare moments which, before they are enjoyed, are swallowed in the abyss of everyday existence, is a way of living with them again and releasing ourselves from that mediocrity of life which would persuade us that all life is mediocre; and recollection brings in this way a high and abiding sense of greatness. A sense of greatness apprehended in this way, however, is also a sense of the unsatisfactoriness of life; and the poets in whom it is found are poets not quite at home in the world as it is, and with an explicit or concealed transcendental presumption. Like every superhuman longing, regret takes us within the boundary of the mystery of life, making us feel at once its glory and abasement, its heavenly and its earthly sources, and, in their interaction, its tragedy; and that is why the poetry of regret moves us more deeply and brings a more essential consolation than poetry of a more heroic and confident note. The German poetry inspired by regret lives always on the verge of mysticism, and, in apprehending the divine, remains human. It exists at the point where the transcendental and the actual touch; it is never beyond, but always within the mystery; and in a life where mystery can not be solved that is, perhaps, the highest act of which the spirit is capable. In "*Kennst du das Land*," "*Aus der Jugendzeit*" and the "*Ballade des Ausseren Lebens*," this poetry, it is true, is not consciously mystical; there is in it no spoken recognition of transcendental reality;

yet that is what inspires it and distinguishes it from the poetry of the earth and of human passion and character, a poetry as beautiful, but with a more immediate and less disturbing beauty.

Hofmannsthal is not a major German poet; he did not write enough poetry of the first rank. But he has written some of the finest lyrics in the German language, lyrics to which men will return as long as poetry is read. His later works show talent of a high order, and they are always distinguished by that beauty of form which is part of his genius; but they have not the fullness of vision which glorified his earlier work, and it is hard to believe that they will be read in another fifty years. His aphorisms on life, art and literature are profound and full of finesse, and his literary criticism is probably better than that of any other living writer. But all these one would gladly resign for another volume of poetry equal to his first. Still, it was not altogether a loss that his genius reached so soon the balance of qualities which constituted its perfection; for that genius, grasped in all its power before the preoccupations of existence had had time to condition it, to change it to something less beautiful than itself, has expressed itself in poetry which in a profound sense is unlike any other poetry, and in being strange remains in the grand tradition of the German spirit.

EDWIN MUIR.

#### FRANKLIN AND THE PHYSIOCRATS.

THE indebtedness of Adam Smith to the French economists of the eighteenth century is well-known, but their influence on the leading spirits in the struggle for American independence has not been so clearly acknowledged. Yet Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine all came into personal contact with Quesnay or with some of his followers, and readily accepted the view of natural law as a guide to human action that distinguished the Physiocrats, who were engaged in developing the technique of freedom in the shadow of the French court.

The Physiocrats believed that the instinct which led men to live together in communities was a true guide to that higher civilization where want should be banished and there should be leisure for spiritual development. They saw that the greater the freedom of intercourse, the greater the possibilities of co-operation and combination by which the production of wealth is increased and human wants are satisfied. But they also saw that the lawmakers were of a contrary opinion, and had imposed numerous restrictions which hampered production and interfered with buying and selling and transporting the goods produced from the earth. The State, instead of resting on the general prosperity that would result from free and voluntary co-operation among the population, drew its revenues from monopolies and from taxes which tended to strangle production and trade, to impoverish the subjects and dry up the ultimate source of supplies for the Treasury.

Quesnay and his followers, having discovered what they considered important truths, entered with enthusiasm into the discussion, enlisting the interest of open-minded men everywhere for proposals that were of universal application. Adam Smith was one of their most attentive listeners, and in his discussions with them laid the foundations for "*The Wealth of Nations*," parts of which he submitted to Franklin before publication. Franklin also exchanged ideas directly with Dupont de Nemours, Mirabeau, Turgot, the Abbé



Morellet, Condorcet, and "the venerable apostle Quesnay" himself. Condorcet addressed him as "the modern Prometheus" and "my dear and illustrious colleague," and Turgot made the famous epigram concerning him: *Eripuit cælo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis*.

In a discussion in which force was presented as the final arbiter in human affairs, Quesnay replied that as force can not act unless it is directed, opinion rules in the end. Applying their own logic, the Physiocrats assumed the task of educating public opinion. Their chief medium of publication was a bi-weekly paper, originally conducted by the Abbé Baudeau under the title *Éphémérides du Citoyen, ou Chronique de l'Esprit National*, and later edited by Dupont as a monthly, with the sub-title *ou Bibliothèque des Sciences Morales et Physiques*. In the issue of September, 1769, speaking of the foreigners whose beliefs ran parallel with those of the Physiocrats, Dupont said, "Who does not know that the English have to-day their Benjamin Franklin, who has adopted the principles and the doctrine of our French economists, a doctrine that he is so worthy to spread and to defend."

Franklin was, in fact, a contributor to Dupont's journals, publications described by Dr. S. Bauer as "the first example of journalism made subservient to social science." These works of the Physiocrats, he says, were written "with a distinct practical tendency, namely: to struggle for free trade, free enterprise, and equal taxation; to combat the crushing burdens imposed by commercial restraints, industrial monopoly, arbitrary assessment, and lavish public expenditure."

Writing to Dupont from London in 1768, Franklin says that he has received great pleasure, as well as instruction, from reading Quesnay's writings, edited by Dupont under the name "Physiocratie." He praises their freedom from local and national prejudices and partialities. There is, he says, "so much benevolence to mankind in general, so much goodness mixt with wisdom, in the principles of your new philosophy, that I am perfectly charmed with them." He laments that the "wisdom which sees the welfare of the part in the prosperity of the whole" seems not yet to be known in England, where it is not suspected "that what is best for mankind, or even for Europe in general, may be best for us." It is only from the Physiocratic philosophy, he adds, that the maxims of a "more happy conduct are to be drawn, which I therefore sincerely wish may grow and increase till it becomes the governing philosophy of the human species, as it must be of superior beings in better worlds."

The rewards of the reformer are commonly reserved for a somewhat uncertain future, and we find Franklin sending to Dupont, "by our valuable friend M. Baudeau," three guineas for the *Éphémérides*, with the encouraging message, "You are doing a great deal of Good to Mankind, for which I am afraid you are not duly rewarded; except in the Satisfaction that results from it to your benevolent Mind." One wonders what the benevolent French radical would have thought could he have foreseen that his descendants, citizens of a republic founded on the equalitarian principles so dear to his heart, would enjoy an identification with the State, and a material prosperity, that the *noblesse* of the old regime would have looked upon with envy.

When Franklin was in Paris in 1776, he often conversed with Turgot, who had just been dismissed from the Ministry. Turgot inquired about the Constitutions of the different American States, and wrote down for his American friend his views on taxation. Although the Physiocrats did not aim at the overthrow of exist-

ing Governments, their insistence on natural rights and their plea for freedom coincided with the political aspirations of the time. Lafayette and some of his companions were inspired by the love of liberty that had been awakened by the discussions of the economists. Indeed, one of the most engaging of the French officers who came to America, François-Jean de Beauvoir, marquis of Chastellux, was a follower of Turgot and Adam Smith, and an admirer of Franklin, Jefferson and Washington. He is variously described as philosopher, historian, economist, poet, naturalist, artist, conversationalist and writer. A major-general in the French forces, he landed at Newport in 1780 and sailed home from Boston two years later. In the meantime, he had made his way on horseback with his companions to Washington's headquarters in Pennsylvania, had taken part in the fighting, and after the battle of Yorktown had travelled through the South and visited Jefferson at Monticello.

The nature of the discussions which Chastellux carried on with his American friends may be judged by the views he expressed in a work entitled, "De la Félicité Publique, ou Considérations sur la Sort des Hommes dans Différentes Époques de l'Histoire." He would not advise the nations, he says, to judge of their power or happiness by coloured maps; and he would have them beware above all things of signing exclusive commercial treaties, "which succeed treaties of peace only to destroy them." Any reciprocal agreements should be based on freedom, with equal treatment for all nations. Special rights and preferences should be relinquished and liberty made the sole stipulation. Freedom alone, he declared, will assure growth and prosperity, and as each nation has a variety of productions and numerous wants which it can not satisfy, commerce will be founded on the general happiness.

This reasoning was endorsed by Franklin, who replied to a development of Chastellux's argument by the Abbé Morellet, "Nothing can be better expressed than your sentiments are on this point, where you prefer liberty of trading, cultivating, manufacturing, etc., even to civil liberty, this being affected but rarely, the other every hour." He excuses the departure from the just rule, due to the war-debt contracted by the new republic, but in sentiment, he adds, "we are well disposed to abolish duties on importation, as soon as we possibly can afford to do so"; a pious hope that still bids fair to take a long time in the fulfilment. The fact is that the American Revolution, like the French Revolution then brewing, was essentially a contradiction of all the high-sounding principles its supporters proclaimed. Military necessity cares little for liberty and brotherhood, and the unwieldy debts that are the inevitable legacy of war offer sufficient excuse for oppressive taxes and other forms of governmental tyranny.

It is customary to speak with reverence of the leading figures in the Revolutionary struggle, and to assume that their actions were dictated by a uniform wisdom, a myth that has proved serviceable to many a political charlatan. Jefferson took some pains to point out the fallible nature of the men who fashioned the Republic, and to suggest that knowledge ought to increase with experience. It is absurd to believe, he said, that nothing can be devised more perfect than what has already been established. The bitter controversies indulged in by the venerated founders of the Republic ought to make indiscriminate praise difficult; and if we see wisdom in the attempt to make natural law a compass and guide in the matter of government, it must be admitted that the success of



the Titans was but meagre. The mariners praised their compass, but found too many reasons for disregarding it in favour of a dead-reckoning that landed the ship of State on many a reef.

The Declaration of Independence took high moral ground, but in the Constitution compromise played a leading rôle; and the concessions it made to the idealism that had formed the excuse for separation from England were easily disposed of by legal interpretation. In fact the new form of government was modelled substantially on the old. In freeing themselves from British rule the Colonists had not escaped from the rule of authority, and had still to suffer for their ignorance of the laws of political economy. The military campaign was soon ended, but the campaign of enlightenment undertaken by Franklin and some of his associates, inspired by their French contemporaries, still looks to a distant goal.

FRANK W. GARRISON.

### THE POEMS OF FATHER HOPKINS.

MANY fine poets have failed to win recognition in their generation; but none, with the exception of Gerard Manley Hopkins, has deliberately tried to avoid recognition. He shunned publicity and the notice of men that he might uninterruptedly strive, with I know not what ascetic discipline, to make of verse an art more arduous and daring than it had ever been before. Fra Angelico painted his pictures kneeling and in tears; Father Hopkins may be said to have written his poems nailed to a cross.

His life was one of those that could be told in a single sentence: it had adventures but no incidents. For this reason, he seems to have felt a special devotion towards Alphonsus Rodriguez, the saint whose hidden life, so much like his own, had for some years before his death been spent in the humdrum task of teaching Latin to schoolboys.

Yet God (that hews mountain and continent,  
Earth, all, out; who, with trickling increment,  
Veins violets and tall trees makes more and more)  
Could crowd career with conquest while there went  
Those years and years by of world without event  
That in Majorca Alphonso watched the door.

In view of Hopkins's dread of notoriety, it might almost appear that the difficulties and obscurities of his work were so many barbed-wire fences put up to preserve his solitude from intrusion. But his curious style was rather the consequence of his loneliness than its cause. He did not suspect that he was obscure; for he was writing merely in the way most natural to him, believing his mode of expression best suited (as it undoubtedly was) to his subject. When he discovered that the intimates to whom he ventured to show his poems confessed their bewilderment, he was genuinely surprised. In the letter that went with the poem from which I have quoted the simplest lines, he wrote: "The sonnet (I say it snorting) aims at being intelligible." When his friends were obliged to admit that they could not make head or tail of "Tom's Garland," he patiently gave them a careful elucidation of it, concluding with the cry, "O once explained, how clear it all is!" He probably thought it was.

His style has its own original beauty; but it is a style that no one should (even were it conceivable that any one could) ever use again. As Coventry Patmore said, "It has the effect of pure gold imbedded in masses of impracticable quartz." Mr. Robert Bridges, in his useful notes to his edition of Hopkins's poems,

dwells at some length upon the poet's faults, upon his artistic wantonness and artistic eccentricity. "These," he says truly, "a reader must have courage to face, and must in some measure condone before he can discover the great beauties." The grammatical skeleton is often absent from the body whose spirit goes soaring up to the seventh heaven; the thoughts and words are packed too tightly; and the oddities of rhyme and rhythm are sometimes, it must be frankly acknowledged, repellently ugly. Here, for instance, are the first two stanzas of "The Bugler's First Communion":

A bugler boy from barrack (it is over the hill  
There)—boy bugler, born, he tells me, of Irish  
Mother to an English sire (he  
Shares their best gifts surely, fall how things will),

This very, very day came down to us after a boon he on  
My late being there begged of me, overflowing  
Boon in my bestowing,  
Came, I say, this day to it—to a First Communion.

*Boon he on* and *Communion* as rhymes are bad enough, but what can be said of *Irish* and *Sire he shares*, where the ingenious monstrosity is made worse by the splitting of a word (and a one-syllable word) in half? Yet the same poem can go on finely and without any obscurity:

Frowning and forefending angel-warder  
Squander the hell-rook ranks sally to molest him;  
March, kind comrade, abreast him;  
Dress his days to a dexterous and starlight order.

These impassioned poems (and they are most difficult when most impassioned) were intended to be read aloud. For though the voice will not make them more intelligible than the eye finds them to be, it will at least cause a great deal of their oddity to disappear. Even *Sire he shares* as a rhyme to *Irish* scandalizes the ear less than the eye.

Anybody can see the faults of this poetry: even Hopkins was brought to see that "it is the vice of distinctiveness to become queer." The trouble is to persuade anybody to believe that the flamboyant images and the preposterous diction are themselves merely incidental failures in the attempt (sometimes successful) to make words achieve more than any poet has dreamed to be possible. Accordingly, Hopkins's inextricable tangles are more interesting to the student of prosody than the facile smoothness of other men. His lines of lucid loveliness, such as:

Natural heart's ivy, Patience masks  
Our ruins of wrecked past purpose. There she basks  
Purple eyes and seas of liquid leaves all day—

or:

When thou at the random grim forge, powerful amidst peers,  
Didst fettle for the great grey drayhorse his bright and  
battering sandal—

rarely occur, and, when they do, wear the look of accidents.

It must, nevertheless, be definitely said that Father Hopkins was capable of writing, and (as his early poems prove) of writing well in the customary manner. When he turned to the employment of his metrical peculiarities, he devised his own system and worked strictly upon principles which he took the pains to set out clearly and fully.

This system may best be likened to the use of counterpoint in music; two rhythms—one heard and the other hushed—being used simultaneously. Milton had attempted something along these lines in the choruses of "Samson Agonistes," but Hopkins de-



veloped the method and extended its range. The tune sounds confused to all except the most acute listener, to whom, however, the labours of so painful an art add enchantment upon enchantment. It is curious to reflect that the audacious experimenter was an almost morbidly shy young Jesuit priest copying poems into a jealously concealed notebook during the splendid summer of Victorian verse.

None of Father Hopkins's verse (except some unimportant presentation-pieces) was published during his lifetime. Indeed, upon entering the Jesuit novitiate at Roehampton he burned everything that he had written up to that date, in order to mark more deeply in his own mind his act of renunciation. When he took up his pen again there were not half-a-dozen men who were allowed to see his manuscripts. The record of his friendship with one of these men, Richard Watson Dixon, makes charming reading. It began when Father Hopkins wrote to say how sorry he was for the long neglect by the public of Dixon's poems. He went on to say that, before entering the novitiate, where he knew that no books could be personally possessed, he had copied out several of his favourite pieces. This brought back a letter overflowing with gratitude: "To think that you have revolved my words so as to make them part of yourself, and have actually copied out some of them, being denied books, is to me indescribably affecting." So quaintly simple was the Anglican parson's wish to make a suitable return for this appreciation, that he was with difficulty dissuaded from going out of his way to advertise his confidence in the Jesuit's genius in the shape of a foot-note to the "History of the English Church," upon which he was then engaged. It is amusing to picture the horror of the bashful Hopkins at the suggestion!

Hopkins never could be prevailed upon to relax his determination to remain unknown. Not until long after his death did even a few of his poems appear in print. Not until five years ago was the authorized edition of Gerard Manley Hopkins's work given to the world by his literary executor, the Laureate.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

## THE WIVES OF KING SOLOMON.

### VIII. THE CHASTE ONE.

ON the fourteenth day of his flight before Absalom his son, two messengers came to King David from Jerusalem and spoke thus: "Gather yourselves and pass quickly over the water, for so has Ahithophel counselled against you." Thereupon David arose, and he and all the people that were with him began to pass over the Jordan. Through the whole night and until early morning they crossed, and no one was wanting. Those who could swam over, and the others sought shallow parts and forded over. Women and children were carried in the arms of the waders or on the shoulders of the swimmers.

But one young girl lingered behind knowing not whither to turn. She could not swim, and she would not be carried over by a man. Neither would she cross on foot, for then she would have to raise her garments and uncover her body, and that no virtuous daughter of Israel should do. Her companions surrounded her, first entreating her gently, then chiding her severely: they could not remain with her, neither could they leave her alone. And why was she thus exalting herself above all other maidens in Israel? Were not some allowing themselves to be carried over by men? And were not others wading across, lifting their garments and so uncovering their bodies?

And then the mockers began to jeer at her. Her body must be ugly, therefore would she not uncover it. Surely

her body could not be beautiful, for her face was not. Like her nose with the wart on it, her whole body must be dotted with warts. And like her right ear that had a birthmark on it, she herself must be covered with such spots. But the girl paid no heed to all the mockery. She would not be carried by a man, neither would she raise her garments. Gently and piously she spoke, while her face was diffused with a glow of chaste diffidence, and great tears of embarrassment glistened in her eyes.

And as her companions stood about pleading with her, Solomon approached. He was ready to swim across and had discarded all but one garment that he was about to throw into the hands of a slave. But when he saw the crowd around the girl he came nearer and asked what had befallen. And when he heard what had befallen, he burst into loud laughter. Yet he soon stopped short, for he felt upon himself the gaze of the pious child. There was a touching modesty in her tearful eyes, and a plea that he might not laugh at her. And involuntarily he stretched forth his hand for his long coat and threw it round him again. His hands moved, but his thoughts were not with him, and his eyes were fastened upon the virtuous maiden who had lowered her gaze to the ground. Then he ordered his men to fashion a seat of the branches of a tree and carry her over.

The men hastened away to do his bidding, and the crowd dispersed to continue their journey and cross the river, each in his own way. Only Solomon remained with the young girl, who stood confused and abashed, and neither spoke a word. But on the other side of the Jordan he said to her, "Seven wives have I now, and beautiful are they all, one fairer than another, and the least beautiful among them is fairer far than you, yet you have captured my heart with your chastity. Will you be my wife?"

And Avia, first wife of Solomon, said thereto, "He took the chaste one for her chastity, yet he did uncover her body."

DAVID PINSKI.

(Translated from the Yiddish by Anna K. Pinski.)

## MARY IMLAY.

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN has become now a faded historic figure. Her "Vindication of the Rights of Women" (1792) has gone the way of all pioneer-works, thrown aside like the scaffolding of a finished—or should one say nearly finished?—structure. In its day it was a great document, but its day has gone by, its fire burned to ashes, though "generative" ashes; for it was after all only a great pamphlet of the times. Her other writings, still readable and valuable in certain small ways, are now forgotten except by specialists. Yet one side of her life deserves more regard than it has ever won, for she has never had the place to which she is entitled among the lower ranks of great lovers. The usual judgment of her is well represented by Sir Leslie Stephen's summary in the Dictionary of National Biography: "Her faults were such as might be expected from a follower of Rousseau, and were consistent with much unselfishness and nobility of sentiment, though one could wish that her love-affairs had been more delicate." Her marriage to Godwin has in a sense absorbed, though hardly purified, as Sir Leslie's final thrust bears witness, the memory of her passionate *affaire* with Imlay. But the record of this love, chronicled in all its moving details in her letters, makes a story of unusual interest, not only for its frank union, at the outset, of the fleshly and the spiritual, but also for its peculiar tenacity in the face of reason and common sense. If Mary had been simply an emotional and clinging woman there would be nothing more to say, but she was withal a woman of remarkable strength and clearness of mind. Sir Leslie Stephen's reproach of indelicacy is so



far from meeting the case that it is seriously unjust. For one must admit that Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin is one of those women whom one can only understand by waiving explanation. After all human nature is not to be explained, but to be accepted.

Mary Wollstonecraft was by nature high-strung, subject to "nerves," and in love with love. By the age of twenty-six she was already weary of life and given to fits of depression, but she could write, sanely enough, to Dr. Johnson (the publisher): "There is certainly a great defect in my mind—my wayward heart creates its own misery. . . . We must each of us wear a fool's cap; but mine, alas! has lost its bells." In December, 1792, came a crisis. Fuseli, the staid and somewhat dull, declined to take her into his house to live with him and his wife; and, having no use for a Platonic friendship, Mary fled to Paris. Godwin's comment is terse: "What she experienced in this respect, was no doubt heightened by the state of celibacy and restraint in which she had hitherto lived, and to which the rules of polished society condemn an unmarried woman."

In Paris she met Robert Imlay, an American free-lance both in business and in life, and the next April became his mistress. When the French Convention decided to imprison all British subjects, she was recognized, informally at least, though legally, as Imlay's wife; certainly she soon after began to sign herself Mary Imlay. Then at once the tragedy began. Imlay left Paris on business, and thenceforward seems to have flitted from place to place, always on business, always about to return, and when he returned always leaving again. In August she wrote to him: "I am confident my heart has found peace in your bosom. Cherish me with that dignified tenderness, which I have only found in you; and your dear girl will try to keep under a quickness of feeling, that has sometimes given you pain. . . . I like the word affection, because it signifies something habitual; and we are soon to meet to try whether we have mind enough to keep our hearts warm." Surely the spirit of tragedy was standing over her when she wrote that. She has read him accurately, for a month later: "The way to my sense is through my heart; but, forgive me! I think there is sometimes a shorter cut to yours." In the same letter the whole story is outlined; all that remained was to fill in the miserable details:

A glow of tenderness at my heart whispers that you are one of the best creatures in the world. Pardon then the vagaries of a mind that has been almost 'crazed by care,' as well as 'crossed in hapless love,' and bear with me a little longer! When we are settled in the country together . . . my heart, which now, trembling into peace, is agitated with every emotion that awakens the remembrance of old griefs, will learn to rest on yours, with that dignity your character, not to talk of my own, demands.

She fights against the truth: "Do not turn from me," she pleads; "Do not shut your heart against a return of tenderness"; "I am happy to catch your heart whenever I can." He, poor, persecuted lover, humoured her as well as he could. "What a picture you have sketched of our fireside!" she cries, when he has been so feeble as to make some acknowledgment of her affection. She followed him to Havre and there they spent two weeks together. Then on 11 March he returned to Paris, leaving her to give birth, a month later, to their daughter, Fanny.

This was indeed the end; there was no love-meeting after this, only the long series of hopeless hopes, patient and impatient beseechings and upbraidings, lasting nearly two years. She analysed him for his own illumination. "You have frankness of heart, but not often exactly that overflowing (*épanchement de cœur*), which, becoming

almost childish, appears a weakness only to the weak." If he charges her with being romantic, she retorts that he is "embruted by trade and the vulgar enjoyments of life." She remarks upon his "commercial face"; while at the same time she cries: "Come to me, my dearest friend, husband, father of my child." A few days later she reasons with him:

It is your own maxim to 'live in the present moment.' If you do, stay, for God's sake; but tell me the truth—if not, tell me when I may expect to see you, and let me not be always vainly looking for you, till I grow sick at heart. . . . I consider fidelity and constancy as two distinct things; yet the former is necessary to give life to the other, and such a degree of respect do I think due myself, that, if only probity, which is a good thing in its place, brings you back, never return!—for if a wandering of the heart, or even a caprice of the imagination detains you, there is an end of all my hopes of happiness. I could not forgive it if I would.

Little fear need she have of his probity; or of her own ability to forgive. She goes on: "Say but one word, and you shall never hear of me more." But apparently he could not bring himself to say the word, or she to recognize it, for the subsequent letters occupy more than a hundred printed pages; and not long after this she has learned that "it is pleasant to forgive those we love." Censure now alternates with repentance for her injustice to him, false comfort with true suffering. When she has gone to Norway and Sweden, partly to support herself by writing travel-letters—for she will not be dependent on him—ill, worn with grief, and harassed with indecision and disappointment, her letters are outcries of pain reaching an almost tragic dignity of utterance; but in a moment she tells him she is sorry she has disturbed his cheerfulness with betrayal of her suffering. With a return of health, when some of the stupor of grief is gone, she attains a kind of vivacity; but weeks go by without a letter from him, and a pride asserts itself beside her despair: "This heart is worthy of the bliss its feelings anticipate." This feeling in turn, however, gives way to another: "I am disgusted with myself for having so long importuned you with my affection." From Copenhagen, a month later: "Gracious God! It is impossible for me to stifle something like resentment, when I receive fresh proofs of your indifference." Then from Hamburg: "I am content to be wretched, but I will not be contemptible." "I leaned on a spear that has pierced me to the heart."

Meanwhile, in September, a year and a half since their parting, she begs him to "decide" and keep her in suspense no longer! When she reaches London, she learns he is living with a mistress there, and tries to drown herself in the Thames. Still she writes to him and argues and expostulates; but she refuses his insults of money offered, pointing out to him that while she was in Norway, partly on business for him, she asked him to send money to her friends; and he even left bills that came back to her after their final severance. He accused her of "tormenting" him; she replied that she had been "treated ungenerously." She could still write that the hope of regaining his affection "every day grows fainter and fainter."

Her attempted suicide seems to have roused Imlay for a moment, so that he protested his present liaison was only a transient whim, and proposed their reunion. She yielded for an instant to fresh hope, but now finally her strength of character declared itself so far as to force him to an ultimate choice: leave this mistress for good or leave her for ever. Imlay seemed on the point of meeting this not unreasonable request, showed her the house he was about to hire for them, then fled to Paris with his latest mistress. When he returned, three months after—



ward, her incorrigible passion flamed again, and though not long before he had said "with ungovernable passion that he would not see her," he met her with fair words but still empty.

Her last letter to him paints his whole character in stern but pathetic distinctness. It ends on the same note with which her letters began: "It is strange that, in spite of all you do, something like conviction forces me to believe you are not what you appear to be. I part with you in peace."

In less than a year after this was written, and only a short while after her last attempt on poor Imlay's long-suffering heart, she went to live with Godwin, and at the same time was sketching a comedy, the serious scenes of which were based upon incidents of her own story. Amazing woman!

Thus the tale is ended. To analyse, to comment, is both easy and futile. What is interesting is the tale itself; as a "document," and also for the fulness and depth of the passion, revealed too faintly in the *disjecta membra* of fragmentary quotation. In the edition of the Letters which was published in 1798, Godwin suggests that they "may possibly be found to contain the finest examples of the language of sentiment and passion ever presented to the world"; but while this is claiming too much, there is, however, much justice in it. Mary Imlay loved not blindly, but too well. Nearly every letter is heavily underscored with the truth of a sincere, profoundly-moved spirit. So sincere and so profound was her affection that she could not reconcile herself to the possibility of its being rejected. If she seems weak and absurdly incapable of seeing the truth, it is because she banished reason, wanting only love. She herself declared that "passion pursues with more heat than reason, and with most ardour during the absence of reason." But on the other hand, as she told Imlay in one of her earliest letters, "Nothing worth having is to be purchased"; and when she pursued him with plea after plea, it was not to buy back his love with her devotion, but to win him from his baser self, his "inferior gratifications." She believed in him.

Nevertheless, her long persistence brought with it some loss of dignity. "Consider," she wrote to him, "whether you find it necessary to sacrifice me to what you term 'the zest of life.'" For Imlay, adventurer and lover, life was nothing without its zest; for her, without its passion. But she saw, while she fought against the acknowledgment, that he was sacrificing her continually, and that beyond a certain point the position was disastrous to her; but she loved too fully (too heedlessly, perhaps) to care about her own disaster. No doubt it was her inability to hold Imlay from the first that drove her to pursue so madly and lay down her moral and intellectual superiority at his unworthy feet. But while she struggled against despair, she recognized it without accepting it. For her heart was not broken, it was beaten numb. In a sense, moreover, she was too weak to cease fighting: he too cowardly to be kind.

At any rate, it will not do to write her down a mere emotionalist or sensualist. None such could have written her powerful answer to Burke's *Reflections* (her "Vindication of the Rights of Men") or her "Vindication of the Rights of Women." Godwin saw in this latter work an "occasional harshness and ruggedness of character" (had she not already remarked to him that "a husband is a convenient part of the furniture of a house, unless he is a clumsy fixture"?), and it is after all this harshness and ruggedness that lie at the bottom of what seems undignified and "indelicate" in her passion for Imlay. She would scorn an apologist; really she needs none.

PAUL FRANKLIN BAUM.

## LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

### THE CAUCASUS UNDER THE SOVIETS.

#### I. GEORGIA.

SIRS: Georgia, one of the three states that form the Transcaucasian Republic, is the classical land of Menshevik lamentations. From the venerable Kautsky down, western Social Democrats are never tired of telling the sad story of how a perfect Socialist State was blossoming forth in Georgia, only to be blighted by the incursion of the Bolshevik hordes from the north.

On arriving at Tiflis, I found that the overthrown Menshevik Government was undoubtedly lamented by certain classes of the population, but these classes were not those upon which a Socialist Government might be expected to rely for support. The chief mourners for the former regime were princes, former army-officers, capitalists, counter-revolutionary intelligentsia, and fanatical Georgian nationalists who wanted a free hand in persecuting the minor nationalities within the Georgian frontiers. The same causes which made the aristocratic classes regret the coming of the Soviet power were such as would make the Georgian workers and peasants welcome it.

Let me give two concrete illustrations of the economic changes which followed the replacement of the Menshevik by the Soviets. In Tiflis there is a tobacco-factory, named after Rosa Luxemburg. The workers in this factory enjoyed an eleven-hour day under the Tsar. Under the Menshevik they worked nine hours; and the factory remained in private hands. Now the factory has been nationalized; the working-day is seven hours, and the home of the former owner is a nursery for the children of the workers. I visited a village in the sun-baked valley of the Kura, near Tiflis. Here the same sort of economic progression had taken place. Before 1917 a semi-feudal regime existed in the valley. Rich landowners owned almost all the fertile land, and the peasants were forced to live in the most miserable quarters, often in dugouts in the ground. The Menshevik introduced a few outward reforms. They redistributed some of the land, but in such a way as to respect the rights of the former owners, who continued to draw rent and to receive payment in the form of leaseholds. They put up some land for sale, but this naturally did not help the poorest peasants, who were most in need of land. This point was explained to me by a sturdy old peasant-revolutionist, who had formerly worked in America with his *artel*, or society of co-operative workers.

"I told the peasants that they wouldn't get anything out of these land-sales, and so the Menshevik put me in prison," he observed. "Then the Soviet power came, all land was declared the property of the State, and for the first time the poorer peasants received land of their own to cultivate."

The genuine working-class elements among the Georgian Menshevik recognize how fatally they were compromised by association with the landowners and capitalists, and they are now leaving the party by thousands. While I was in Tiflis, Menshevik meetings took place in various sections of the city, and resolutions were adopted providing for the liquidation of the party and for future co-operation with the Communists.

#### II. ARMENIA.

Riding down in the train from Alexandropol to Erivan I discussed the political situation with an Armenian fellow-passenger. He was extremely bitter against the Allied Powers.

"Every Armenian feels as I do about England and France," he said. "By means of promises, which they did



not keep, they lured us into adventures beyond our national strength. When the Turks invaded our country in 1920, we would have been exterminated if it had not been for the help which Russia gave us. So all the Armenians now, whatever their social views, are loyal to the Soviet Government here which binds us closely to Russia."

Armenia is a poor and overcrowded country. The population has been abnormally swelled by incoming refugees from Turkey. At the same time, every one with whom I talked, including both native Armenians and American relief-workers, felt that a great improvement had manifested itself during the last two years. This period, curiously enough, coincides with the establishment of the Soviet power in Armenia; and this undeniable fact might afford food for thought to those who like to ascribe all of Russia's sufferings to the sins of the Revolutionary Government. Armenia was blockaded and invaded while it had a bourgeois nationalist Government; Russia was blockaded and invaded, for different reasons, while it had a working-class Revolutionary Government. Both countries suffered extremely as a result. Armenia's experience should convince any fair-minded observer that capitalism has no power to avert the consequences of war and blockade.

### III. AZERBAIJAN.

The greatest social and economic contrasts are to be found in Azerbaijan, the Republic that lies along the western shore of the Caspian. The bulk of the population is made up of Turkomans, who are ninety-five per cent illiterate. But in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, is located the centre of Russia's oil-industry. There are over forty thousand workers in the vast oil-fields about Baku; and this gives Azerbaijan what is to some extent lacking in Georgia and Armenia, a large and disciplined proletariat. Baku has a chain of workers' clubs, established since the Revolution in every section of the city. In these clubs, which are located in some of the largest buildings in the city, the workers carry on every kind of activity, from practising songs and playing chess to studying Marxian economics.

With a strong base in Baku, the Revolution is gradually spreading its influence over the whole of Azerbaijan. Its effect is especially noticeable in the changed status of the Mohammedan women, who are beginning to discard their veils in many villages. Child-marriage is also being done away with, and the secluded Oriental women of Azerbaijan are beginning to take part in public life side by side with men. A vigorous attack has been launched against illiteracy, and it is hoped that by 1930, the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet power in Azerbaijan, not a single illiterate will be left within the country.

The three States, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which now form the Transcaucasian Republic, are still faced with a hard struggle in recovering from the destruction which was brought about by war and foreign intervention during the turbulent years 1918, 1919 and 1920. Yet notable progress has already been made. At the time when these States had bourgeois Governments, there were incessant wars between them, caused partly by their own insane nationalism, partly by foreign intrigue. At this time British troops were thrown along the oil pipeline from Batum to Baku, and it seemed as if the Caucasus was in danger of sinking into the position of a British colony. The coming of the Soviet power changed all this. The British precipitately withdrew upon the advance of the Red army. There are no more racial feuds between Georgians, Armenians and Tatars. The whole country is turning to the work of peaceful reconstruction with a devotion and energy that are excellently illustrated in the following account of the opening of an irrigation-canal in

Daghestan. The account, which appeared in the *Bakinsky Rabotchi*, reads as follows:

The work on the canal 'October Revolution,' which is seventy-five versts long, was finished by huge *subbotniks* of all the workers on 28 July. [The *subbotnik*, it should be explained, is a voluntary working on Saturday.] The water came to the city Makhach-Khala [Petrovsk] and falls into a reservoir containing two million cubic metres. The canal is built to supply the railway and the city with water and to furnish hydraulic power for the city and neighbouring villages.

The population of the city greeted the coming of the water with enthusiasm. Many old people cried with joy. The Mohammedan priests from some of the neighbouring villages are going to the canal and offering up prayers of thanksgiving, expressing deep gratitude to the Soviet power and to the Daghestan Government.

I am, etc.,  
Moscow.

A. C. FREEMAN.

## MUSIC.

### THE PITTSFIELD FESTIVAL.

IN the small German and Austrian courts of the eighteenth century the music was under the direction of the Kapellmeisters, men of technical competence usually, often of notable skill, but who tended to fall into routine, and to suffer from the limitation of imagination and the narrowing of style that beset the victims of routine. As composers they acquired habits, they systematized and standardized, they erected processes above ideas; and they wrote an immense amount of the kind of music with which we associate their name—music *à la mode*, in the prevailing style, music devoid alike of personal impulse and of wide tradition—in short, rubber-stamp music. Even men of genius like Haydn and Mozart vivified the prevailing style only in their finest works; in many of their inferior symphonies they fell into the clichés of the routine-writers of their school: into the over-obvious balance of phrases in a theme, into the banal tunefulness of some of their minuets and other dances, into the stiff formality of cadences in which tonic and dominant chords are endlessly alternated. The second-rate men never got above these machine-processes; they lived, so to speak, on the crumbs that fell from the tables of genius; they learned the letter, while the spirit escaped them; and they wrote, accordingly, Kapellmeister music in which a perfect exterior concealed complete emptiness.

This Kapellmeister music of the eighteenth century may be taken as the most familiar type of a phenomenon that recurs in every age. It is a misleading though a common error to confine it to the period of the classic symphony. The processes developed in the creation of any idiom are subject to petrification into formulæ the moment they become habitual rather than voluntary, conventional rather than spontaneously expressive. Thus there is a twentieth-century rubber-stamp, quite as mechanical as any earlier one, the employment of which produces a music just as machine-made as any fifth-rate eighteenth-century symphony, though of course entirely different. This was almost perfectly exemplified at the Chamber Music Festival held at Pittsfield, Massachusetts, 27-29 September, in a sextet for three violins, viola, and two 'celli, by Eugène Goossens, and, less completely, in a rhapsody for piano and 'cello by Rebecca Clarke—both works commissioned by Mrs. F. S. Coolidge for this year's festival. Mr. Goossens, a man increasingly well known in England and elsewhere both as composer and conductor, has shown in some of his other works ("By the Tarn," for string



quartet, for example) that he is capable of writing with a delicate and subtle poetry. In his sextet, however, whether because it was a commissioned work or not would be hard to say, he has given his imagination a rest and fallen back frankly on the ultra-modern rubber-stamp. The exuberant and richly scored opening, the texture, sonorous in its polyphony but devoid of thematic significance, the constant unrelieved restlessness, the foreseen inevitable moment when all instruments "take mutes and become melancholy" as visibly as if the direction were thus written in the score, the later *vivo* movement, with a background of tremolo and many plucked notes in jerky dislocated rhythms, down to the final "fake" *fugato* on a distorted theme: all these are the stock "effects" of the Debussy-Ravel-Stravinsky school, as standardized, boring and familiar as the corrugated-iron roof or the papier-mâché panels of commercial architecture.

In Miss Clarke's rhapsody, which was admirably played by Miss May Mukle and Miss Myra Hess, and which is markedly influenced by Ravel, Stravinsky and Ernest Bloch, there are many of the same convenient stage-properties: the inevitable passage, for instance, of muted 'cello, with an *ostinato* figure for the piano on Debussyan harmonies, and the later equally inevitable Stravinskiesque *vivo*—interlocking thumbs for the pianist, 'cello *pizzicato*. But while the Goossens sextet is wholly music *à la mode*, Miss Clarke's rhapsody is potentially something much more than that, something out of which both mood and personality seem ready to emerge if the composer could only trust to her impulses and dare to be out of fashion. The opening, for instance, has a touch of nobility and mystery that might easily become compelling, and there is a bit of folk-song in the piano just before the final sprint that seems all ready to bloom into beauty when the composer unfortunately remembers that tunefulness is taboo, and turns it off. This is the bane of the rubber-stamp, that it so easily imposes itself smotheringly on talents that, but for it, might develop a style of real personality and power.

Two other pieces, imported also, like the works of Mr. Goossens and Miss Clarke, from England, illustrated the influence of another convention, one not so contemporary but hardly less narrowing. Mr. Frank Bridge, who came in person to the festival, was represented by a sextet for two violins, two violas, and two 'celli, written it is said nearly twenty years ago, and certainly greatly inferior to his fine quartet in E minor which the London string quartet played at the third festival in 1920. The sextet, a youthful work, is full of a Wagner-Tschaikowsky romanticism which rises at times to charming exuberance, but unfortunately falls at others into mawkish sentimentality and platitude. The slow movement, with its Tschaikowsky-like hypnotic insistence on a short, sighing, rhythmic figure of four notes, becomes pretty monotonous; and for relief there is only an *allegro giusto* that in the expressive phrase of the moving-picture director would be called "sneak music." Mr. Bridge has travelled a long way from the Victorianism of this convention to the quiet and deeply moving beauty of the *adagio molto* of his quartet.

Even more Wagnerian, almost indeed to the verge of parody, was a sextet for six violas by B. J. Dale which began with the Valkyries' Ride and ended with the Siegfried Idyl. To write a piece at all for six violas is a *jeu d'esprit*, a "stunt" to which Mr. Dale would probably never have been incited had he not known that incomparable violist, Lionel Tertis, whose playing of Brahms's clarinet sonata in F minor in an arrange-

ment for viola and piano, with Miss Myra Hess, was perhaps the most beautiful moment of the whole festival this year. Six violas can do, with a good deal of trouble and obvious effort, what could be more easily and naturally done with the aid of violins and violoncellos; there were even some moments in which the sonority was extraordinarily *nourri*, though there were others when the scraping, squeaking and whistling were almost physically painful; but, on the whole, one's feeling about six violas recalled that of Dr. Johnson about some feat, the great difficulty of which was pointed out to him by one of its admirers. "Sir," replied he in effect, "I do not doubt that it is difficult, but I would that it were impossible."

There was a good deal of fresh and ingratiating music in the compositions both of Mr. Bridge and Mr. Dale, but on the whole their appeal was limited by their conformity to the rather narrow tradition of Wagner-Tschaikowsky romanticism, which, though not so narrow as that of ultra-modernism, is, like it, constricting and too dependent on association with stage and stage-effects to be altogether a wholesome tradition for chamber-music. For not only is every variety of rubber-stamp paralyzing to spontaneous personal feeling and its expression, but the deepest and most powerful expression requires the most varied and many-sided training to develop it. "The writers," says Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, "who succeed ultimately in differentiating themselves most from the mass, in attaining a point of view all their own, are those who have served the longest apprenticeship; their early works are usually timid, tentative, imitative, and scarcely to be distinguished from others of the same school and tradition. This is because true originality is not so much freshness of talent as a capacity to survive and surmount experience, after having met and assimilated it, which implies a slow growth and a slowly and powerfully moulded intention."

Of all the new works played at the present festival, that which seemed to spread its roots farthest and deepest was the quartet in F minor, opus 10, of Paul Hindemith, of the German school. This work, which is said to have been followed later by another quartet verging on Schoenberg, is conceived in a style amply modern though based on the classics; it stems back through Strauss and Reger to Brahms and Beethoven. Some of its themes, to be sure, dangerously approach the banal, especially the syncopated main theme of the finale, a too long and rather wandering movement; but at least it has themes, and it develops them to such good purpose that often some of the least interesting themes produce the most interesting music. The second movement is a set of variations on an attractive but rather elusive theme. The variations achieve in several places a valid and individual beauty, notably in one in which the viola discourses above the *pizzicati* of the 'cello, and with accompaniment from the two muted violins. This movement has a lovely ending.

Two works harder to classify, but perhaps the most original of all that were played at this festival, were a sonata for piano and viola by Arnold Bax, and a quartet, "Stornelli e Ballate," by G. Francesco Malipiero. Mr. Bax's sonata, splendidly played by Mr. Lionel Tertis and Miss Myra Hess, and now heard for the first time in America, is stamped with strong individuality. The first movement, beginning with high bell-like chords in the piano, and after varied episodes ending with the same passage, shows a sense of shape rare in modern music. The second is a sort of wild, rhapsodic, frenetic Irish jig, very much distorted and "made up," often ugly and harsh, too long, sometimes



grotesque, but of indubitable interest. The finale, with its austere repellent opening, with harsh handfuls of chords, is almost too restless, and is indeed fatiguing in its restlessness. In general, Mr. Bax writes rhetorically, dramatically, even melodramatically; the gloominess of tone seems exaggerated, and is relieved only in the *macabre scherzo*. Nevertheless one felt a real personality behind his work.

Equally far removed from the rubber-stamp, though in a completely different direction, was Malipiero's "Stornelli e Ballate," a sequel to his "Rispetti e Strambotti" which won the prize at the festival in 1920. Like that work it is a series of brief sections, unrelated to each other, but suggesting a sequence of popular verse-forms, and ingratiating by its exuberance of spirits. There is little beauty in it, and practically no development of thought. There is little of that fine weaving of the texture that is the special glory of the string quartet. The workmanship is rough, impressionistic, summary. But what rhythmic energy! What refreshing freedom from self-consciousness and the universal modern fear of being banal! What gusto!

One's final impression of the new music presented at this year's festival was that musical speech has become surprisingly eclectic and many-sided, and that the most difficult achievement for the contemporary composer is not to acquire the current harmonic idiom, but to eliminate all that does not belong to his temperament, and to build with what remains an expression spontaneously and genuinely individual. To this the use of current clichés and formulæ is often a fatal obstacle. To be in the momentary fashion is by no means to make a permanent mark. A facile use of the "tricks of the trade" now most favoured is far less helpful to a composer than the sort of creative vigour that expresses itself rather through rhythm and melody than through harmony, that is more careful of ideas than of sonorities and "effects." By contrast with the vitality of Malipiero and Bax, how threadbare and conventional seems a work like Goossens's sextet! It matters not whether the Kapellmeister deal in tonic and dominant or in augmented triads and "polytonie": wherever process becomes petrified and takes the place of thought, arterio-sclerosis sets in and music dies.

DANIEL GREGORY MASON.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

### OPIMUM AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

SIRS: In view of the recent discussion of the opium-question at Geneva, and the importance of the subject to the well-being of humanity, will you allow me to refer to a phase of the matter that appears to have been a source of no inconsiderable confusion in current discussions, viz: the part played by the Government that exists in India in thwarting remedial measures brought before the League of Nations. Mrs. Hamilton Wright, for instance, in an article in the *American Review of Reviews*, referring to the contention that opium is necessary as a prophylactic for Indians, says that the "Indian Government" succeeded in impressing this view upon the League of Nations, a fact "which has distinctly hurt the prestige of the League both in America and in England where public opinion has for many years loudly condemned the opium-trade." This statement will create misunderstanding, not only because of the phrase "Indian Government," but also because of the comment thereon. It must be understood that while public opinion has condemned opium "loudly," it has not condemned it widely for the reason that, owing to the long-continued "conspiracy of silence," the average person has not known the facts about the matter. The uninformed reader, I am sure, would gather from this remark of Mrs. Wright that the Indians were to blame for this iniquitous

thing, when, as a matter of fact, it goes on in spite of them. The people of India have persistently protested against the opium-monopoly and traffic maintained in their country, but have been overruled by their British masters. A distinguished Indian journalist, Syud Hossain, in a comprehensive article which appeared in the *Freeman* says: "This Government of India is not responsible to the people of India." As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as the "Government of India" in the sense in which the description is popularly taken as implying a national Government. There is the *British Government in India*, absolute and independent of the people of the country. . . .

According to the *New York Times* for 2 June last "the latest action of the League of Nations at Geneva is most discouraging. The American proposal of restricting the production of opium only for medicinal and scientific purposes has not been accepted in a way that can be effective." The substitution for this phrase of the meaningless word "legitimate" (which substitution was due to the efforts of the British), led Taraknath Das—leading witness at the Congressional hearing on opium last February—to say later: "The British Government has again wrecked the American plan of suppressing the opium-evil, and the League of Nations has upheld the undoing of America's good work by Britain."

This is illustrative of the pressure that can be brought to bear against the efforts of a man like Representative Stephen G. Porter. In view of the fact that (according to the Congressional report) we had about 2,000,000 addicts in this country as far back as 1918, it behooves us to fight this evil. If our fight is to avail, the American public must be in possession of the truth. . . . To quote Mr. Porter: "It is only a matter of bringing the world to a point where it will clearly understand the sordidness of the entire situation." I am, etc.,

JULIA ELLSWORTH FORD.

## BOOKS.

### THE IMPASSE OF CIVILIZATION.

THE strain and suffering which have been brought into existence throughout the world by the war and its aftermath of European disintegration, have caused various thinkers to put forward new attempts to estimate the value of that series of complex phenomena known as life. As in the days before the breakup of the Roman Empire, so now: men are becoming generally more eager to spend their time in thinking about existence, about good and evil, God and the soul, than to enjoy their existence untrammelled by such speculations. Therefore, recent years have found an increasing public demand for books of history, of philosophy, of solid information. Many of the most speculative and suggestive volumes of this class were in fact conceived and executed by their writers before the war came about: but art has a way of anticipating life, and it was not difficult, in the years before the conflict, for any sensitive observer to predict the coming storm. Thus the Spaniard, Miguel de Unamuno, found in his "Tragic Sense of Life," published in 1912, that the value of existence itself depends upon the desire of every man to prolong his life as far as possible, to attain personal immortality: the Frenchman Elie Faure, in his "History of Art," first published in 1910-12, has stated that the thing of highest value in life is the production of art; and now the Englishman, Havelock Ellis, enters the field with a book<sup>1</sup> which, he informs us, has taken him fifteen years to write, and in which he maintains that the value of life depends upon its achievement of a stable and abiding form of civilization. As in the case of Unamuno and of Faure, it is impossible to point out the value of his thought without in some way summarizing the book itself; but this I can not do without

<sup>1</sup>"The Dance of Life." Havelock Ellis. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$4.00.



taking up the entire space allotted to me. Moreover, I happen to be in disagreement with Mr. Ellis, and I therefore prefer to meet him upon the narrower if more dangerous ground of critical controversy.

To begin with the point of most importance, Ellis accepts the contention of Oswald Spengler, reinforced by Flinders Petrie in his "Revolutions of Civilization," that there have been eight periods of civilization in the world, each followed by a corresponding decline. The course of each of these may be clearly plotted. At the outset there is always a race so favourably placed by fortune as to be able to direct its own destiny without outside interference. This race thereupon evolves a body of national culture, which is civilization in its growing stage. As this national culture expands, provided it does not come into contact with a culture which has advanced so far in a different direction as to be capable of disrupting it (which happened in the case of the South Sea Islanders and the American Indians), it intermixes various foreign elements with its body of thought, as well as with the race itself, thereby evolving what we know as civilization. But there is a limit to this process. As civilization develops, and tries to cover more and more foreign material with its central synthesis, it either becomes arrested through atrophy, or it loses touch with its original function and dissolves into fragments. The former happened in the case of the Chinese and Egyptians, the latter in the case of the Greeks and the Romans. Civilization, therefore, is in any case a transient phenomenon. As Mr. Ellis himself observes, it is a mass of values, not exclusively beneficent in aim.

But this, which I do not dispute, and which this book makes abundantly clear, is not all. Thanks to the mechanical development of the last century which has now conquered the West, and before which the East is putting up only a feeble show of resistance, the mass of values which we now call civilization has suddenly become accessible not only to one single race, but to the most-favoured specimens among all races. Civilization has become international and cosmopolitan. It is possible for an Englishman and a Chinese, an American and a Hindu, a Scandinavian and a South Sea Islander to meet and to share ideas in common; and if we hold, as Mr. Ellis apparently does, the view of Spengler that "civilization is the most externalized and artistic condition of which the higher embodiment of man is capable; it is a spiritual senility, an end which with inner necessity is reached again and again," then it follows that this new cosmopolitan civilization in its turn is also doomed, nor is there anything to replace it; since it is now doubtful whether a return to the age before mechanics is possible.

It is true that Ellis does attempt to grapple with this problem in the concluding pages of his book; but the solution he offers is not a new one, nor is it, I think, altogether satisfactory. It is the solution of eugenics, and as such goes back to Plato, and even earlier than Plato to the Laws of Manu, the first Aryan legislator. Briefly, what he proposes is that a certain body of intelligent men and women of cosmopolitan culture should be segregated from the mass in every nation, and should be allowed to continue to produce a finer type of human being, whom we might conveniently call the truly "civilized man," or "*homo sapiens*," or "the overman." But to this there are two objections to be made.

In the first place, what guarantee have we, in the present acquisitive state of society, that man is capable of controlling the machine he himself has invented? Take, for example, the war: was that not a case of

the machine getting out of control and wrecking humanity? Or take the present-day action of the French Government in the Ruhr; will not the military machine which the French themselves have invented so dazzle their eyes with its possibilities as a piece of efficient mechanism as to end in wrecking not only Germany, but France as well? When the same machine completes its grip upon Asia and Africa in turn, what then becomes of civilization? We must face the disagreeable fact that human beings everywhere, though equipped with steam-engines and aeroplanes, telephones and telegraphs, machine-guns, wireless and motor-cars, have no more cranial capacity (as Remy de Gourmont pointed out) than their ancestors who lived in caves twenty-five thousand years ago. Nor would any increased cranial capacity give them more power to organize into a state of society which is assured of stability and progress. That is a question not of the brain, but of the will. If we will to maintain ourselves upon a certain high artistic and moral level, we may be able to do so; but hitherto this will has been exercised only by a small minority, whose efforts on behalf of others have been swept away by invincible ignorance and fathomless stupidity again and again. So it will always be, as long as the world lasts.

This objection Mr. Ellis does not meet; but there is still another and weightier argument against the remedy he proposes. If only an international civilization composed of specially selected and segregated stocks has now any chance of existence, how are we to achieve it in the midst of our large industrial democracies? For it is obvious that in the Occident at least, the voting-power, the higher birth-rate, and ultimately the power of producing commodities (with the collapse of the exchanges) have been placed, not in the hands of any minority, but in those of the people; and the people, as Ellis himself points out, have, through the pressure of industrial competition, become of poor quality, with a tendency to feeble-mindedness and rabbit-like overbreeding.

Moreover, when placed under the most favourable conditions—as in the United States—this system of democratic control leads only to standardization in life, thought, art and morals, to a habit of mass-thinking which is detestable and deplorable, and itself the negation not only of civilization, but of any living culture. This is so much the case that "so far as the production of high original genius is concerned, a small Italian city like Florence with a few thousand inhabitants, had far more to show than all of the United States put together." If this is the case in the green wood of America to-day, what may we expect to see in the dry and decaying wood of Europe and the East to-morrow?

I have said enough to show that, by the testimony of this book itself, civilization has not only reached an impasse, but that the only way out, namely, eugenics, is not for the moment available. I might go on to show that every Utopia, from Plato's to the scientific Utopia promised by the eugenists, has been broken by the economic Scylla of supply and demand, or has foundered in the Charybdis of the biologic fact, whereby the inferior strain always seeks and mates with the superior. There remains only for me to ask the desperate question which Ellis too asks, but does not answer. Is civilization in itself desirable? Would it not be better to adopt the remedy, suggested by Rousseau, of a general return to nature? According to Flinders Petrie, we are at the close of a period which opened with the triumph of Christianity over the Roman Empire, and which has been moribund since the beginning of the nineteenth century. That which we are keeping



alive, and which we boastfully call "civilization," is at best only an archaistic survival buttressed by mechanical power. Would it not be better to recognize the fact that we stand at the end of a chapter in the human story and of the divine legend, and to scrap all of our machines and build anew? Even if mankind had to lie fallow for a thousand years, human beings would re-awaken from that night of universal darkness with the consciousness—would that our modern civilization could grant it!—that they had in them the power to create heroes, gods and geniuses as great as Socrates, as Jesus, as Láo-tsze.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

### ERNST HAECKEL'S ADOLESCENCE.

HAECKEL was one of the most picturesque figures of nineteenth-century science. He belongs at least as much to the intellectual history of Europe as to biology. Enthusiastic, pugnacious, even ruthless as an expositor of evolution, he was the foremost protagonist of free-thought not only in Germany but throughout the Continent. Reviled by the reactionary, superciliously sniffed at by the academic Brahmins, he gained thousands of followers by his uncompromising championship of the truth as he saw it. United with his combativeness as a writer was a personal amiability that charmed every one who came into closer contact with him; peasant-philosophers and theological colleagues of the University of Jena, itinerant Moravian preachers, and men like Huxley and Darwin. The intimate biography of such a character is a matter of general human interest, and English-speaking readers owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Gifford for giving them a rendering of Haeckel's letters to his parents during his most significant formative period.<sup>1</sup> The translation, if too frequently traitorous to English idiom, is faithful enough to the original and quite intelligible; above all, the substance made accessible compensates even for such atrocities as "the head of whom" for "*deren Kopf*," and "this is implored to you" for "*Dies ruft dir zu*."

Some of the comments aroused by these letters demonstrate once more the shallowness of some people's psychologizing. "More surprising," we read, "than anything else to those who know only the later monist Ernst Haeckel . . . is his early sincere Christianity. . . ." First of all, there is nothing surprising in the fact that the youth of twenty should not have held the views he had developed at the age of forty. Was Darwin a selectionist at Cambridge? Did Tolstoy preach land-nationalization at officers' casinos? Certainly in the 'fifties there were not many homes, whether in Germany or elsewhere, that sent their sons to the university as confirmed atheists; and if young Ernst brought with him to Würzburg his father's moderately liberal Protestantism, this is small cause for excessive amazement.

The psychologically interesting point is indeed diametrically opposite to the one implied in the sentence quoted. Discounting the changes bound to come with age, especially when the uncertainties of youth are resolved by the magnificent successes of manhood, we may say in Carlylean fashion that Haeckel, the boy, differed from the man in nothing but opinion. The taste for collecting and drawing, the passion for travel, the fervent admiration for the beauties of scenery so distinctive of the great zoologist were all in full force in his student days. Even specific ideas of later periods crop up, such as the suggestion that many lower organisms would yield marvelous patterns for decorative art. In his social relations,

especially after he had sloughed off the initial *gaucheries* of a nervous, shy adolescent, he reveals the attractive traits that go far to account for his remarkable influence. His correspondence proves him an exemplary son, a loyal friend, a devoted disciple of the great masters who introduced him to the higher reaches of science. Of these, Rudolf Virchow is most clearly delineated, and the relationship between the great pathologist and his student (ultimately his assistant) is in several respects of the utmost interest. In the first place, it is as good an illustration of ambivalence as any psycho-analyst might wish. From the beginning, Virchow's sovereign mastery of fact, his novel interpretation of the nature of disease, his superhuman detachment, evoke profound admiration tempered with the revulsion caused by a thoroughly uncongenial temperament. Intermittently love gains the ascendancy: "How sweet is it to be attacked on Virchow's behalf!" But again and again a caustic phrase from the great sceptic's lips would dash cold water on the young enthusiast's ardour. Thus, the early intercourse between Haeckel and Virchow foreshadows in the most remarkable manner their subsequent antagonism. For while Haeckel became pre-eminently the champion of Darwinism, Virchow persisted in a doubting-Thomas's frame of mind, rejecting the evolutionary doctrine as an illegitimate speculative extension of empirical knowledge. In other words, the correspondence presents us with the prehistory, so to speak, of the psychologically fascinating feud that divided German naturalists into camps favouring and opposing Darwin.

This antithesis also serves as a corrective for that naïve misunderstanding of Haeckel to which even William James fell prey when he used Haeckel as a sample of his tough-minded type. Here there is again the popular over-weighting of opinion as against the far more important innate mental disposition. Not Haeckel but Virchow was the tough member of the pair, despite the younger man's vociferousness on behalf of reason and experience, and his elder's ultimate rehabilitation as a pillar of society through his anti-Darwinian canniness. These externals count for little. In reality, both men were consistent throughout. Virchow remained the scientific puritan incarnate that he had always been, rejecting conclusions that in the nature of the case could not be directly verified. Haeckel, on the other hand, was from the start, and continued to be throughout his life, a typical specimen of tender-mindedness. He recoils with horror from clinical experience, a sentiment only overcome by the most strenuous effort. He shrinks from Virchow's empiricism with its then definitely materialistic bias, just as in later years he rebelled against its rigid exclusion of theory as a complement to observation. In adolescence, the emotionally resented void was filled with a liberal Christian creed; in manhood and old age, Protestantism was superseded by an evolutionary monism that rested on a definitely religious basis. In 1855, Haeckel declined to accept the inductive method in the realm of the spirit, insisting that there was a region where knowledge was relieved by faith. But, psychologically, that is the position of the *Welträtsel* in 1899, when Haeckel issues a warning against a one-sided over-estimation of empiricism and vigorously asserts the claims of "scientific faith" in filling the gaps of knowledge, re-affirming his belief in monism "as a bond between religion and science." The very vehemence of his language in denouncing popular creeds marks him as rather the spokesman of a new cult than the champion of pure experience.

Nevertheless, the conversion from one form of belief to another is invariably a spectacle of psychological interest. The present volume does not explain the change, but brings us to the threshold of mutation: we see Haeckel

<sup>1</sup> "The Story of the Development of a Youth." Ernst Haeckel. Letters to His Parents, 1852-1856. Translated by G. Barry Gifford. New York: Harper and Brothers, \$3.00.



harrowed and shaken in his Leibnitzian optimism by the problem of evil thrust upon him in clinic and operating-room; but the close of his Würzburg semesters still finds him clinging to a rationalized Christianity. Let us hope that the forthcoming publications from the Haeckel archives will shed light on the period immediately following.

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

### NORTHCLIFFE AND HIS WORLD.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE was a strange and, to many, a repellent figure. He left the rather terrifying impression of anything that is bulky in scale and yet mean in essential fibre. It was his life's achievement, as owner and editor-in-chief of a great news-trust, to impress upon a susceptible world the point of view of a very ordinary and unilluminated intelligence. Newspaper-men who hated him and his system—how many there were!—found a happy nickname for him. He was "Napolio," a tawdry and spurious copy of greatness. He had many of the traits of the man upon whom, it was said, he consciously modelled himself; an immense capacity for detail, a strong dynastic instinct (the Brothers were a constant theme on Fleet Street), impatience of criticism, and at the same time a generous instinct for recognizing a loyalty that was given unquestioningly.

The face bespoke the man. It was such a mask as one occasionally notes on veteran actors, over whose features every sort of fictitious emotion has played, and who come at last to out-stare the world with a kind of brazen obliteration. For all his forcefulness and effectiveness, psychologists would no doubt class him among the "intuitives." He had the happy faculty of sensing changes in popular sentiment just in time to jump on the bandwagon and take the steering-wheel. His *volte-face* in regard to Ireland was significant. An Irishman of a sort himself, he was stirred (about the time when public opinion was becoming restive over the monotonous reports of suppression), not by the tragedy of the age-long struggle, but by the commercial possibilities which the civil war was retarding. At the psychological moment came the "reference to the King." It would be interesting to know what office-discipline was visited upon the "stupid telegram" from the *Mail's* bureau in New York. Many believe still that the King spoke the words, and have a shrewd suspicion to whom they were first spoken. But Napolio had his Waterloo. His schedule of fourteen (or was it twenty?) points on which an equitable post-war settlement should be conducted, broadcasted at his own expense on the eve of the Versailles conference, was a thrust in the void, futile as the famous curse of the Archbishop of Rheims. Who recalls it to-day?

It is needless to say that Lord Northcliffe, on his travels, reveals himself as an imperialist of the Simon-pure, hundred-per-cent, big-stick-for-a-nigger type. An Empire of unlimited private enterprise, served by submissive and hard-working "natives," and guarded by watchful British battleships, was what he went out to see. When he finds it, he glows with complacent racial pride. Where he fails to find it he is vaguely troubled and irritated, though the sentiment is a fleeting one and only now and then passes into the realm of reflection. He notes that the railway between Mukden and Peking "in which there is a large amount of British capital invested" pays a thirty per cent dividend, "the highest dividend paid by any railway in the world," and that "the British in the Far East do themselves well, as they deserve to do." Small wonder that he encounters "topping Rolls-Royces"

with a frequency that makes the distinguished exile long for his own "delectable car," or that Peking strikes him as "a Riviera with a dozen added attractions." A thirty-per-cent dividend must be spent somewhere and somehow.

If there is a fly in the ointment of Imperial content it is the pestilent "native." He is acquiring the standards of well-to-do imperialism so quickly and so undeservedly. "All this is passing," the distinguished pilgrim reflects at a moment of depression in India. "Now we have the swaggering, boastful, whisky-and-soda-drinking, horn-spectacled and fountain-pen-wearing Baboo, who likes to think that, because he has the imitative and blotting-paper mind that enables him to pass examinations, he is the equal of the Anglo-Saxon, and *knowing* his inferiority, is bitter and dangerous." One might very pertinently ask from what quarter or to whose profit whisky reaches the Hindu Baboo—or, for that matter, opium the Chinese coolie. At Cairo, "Bull" Allenby is just starting for home to give an account of his policies in the china-shop of the Pharaohs. "There will always be trouble with the young men in Egypt. An old Moor, who had been to Mecca via Cairo, said to me in Morocco, 'You don't whip them enough; boys want whipping,' and others confirmed that sentiment." Sweet sentiment! So grateful to Northcliffe's imperialist soul, in fact, is the sight of a big nation keeping a smaller one in subjection, that, in Seoul, it overcomes his notorious distaste and suspicion where Japan is concerned. "Do I think that Korea is able to rule herself? No, I don't. The Koreans strike me as being similar to the Egyptians and Filipinos—very polite, very suave, fond of writing letters and of oratory, but unpractical."

Yet the man who is our travelling companion through the pages of "My Journey Round the World" is far from being an unlikable character. It is plain that the newspaper-peer's bent was strongly domestic. His thoughts turn constantly to home. He spends hours ransacking the bazaars for celadon for "her Ladyship." A man sick unto death, he bears tropical heat and the discomforts of travel with stoicism. He is as ready to sacrifice rest and privacy to the public interest in his over-topping personality as ever was Mr. Pott of the *Eatonsville Gazette*. It is evident that neither mind nor nerves were in a normal state during the last year of his strenuous life, but there is little sign of derangement in the notes which he dictated to his devoted secretaries. What emerges from them is not a clouded, but a limited intelligence. The snap judgments and pre-digested comment with which they abound might easily be those of a common or garden globe-trotter. But Northcliffe was no ordinary globe-trotter. Through interlocking directorates and press-syndicates he controlled, at the time of his death, news that was reaching some ten million English-speaking readers. To find a man of such eminence and power dismissing the Queensland effort at State-ownership as "lazy and Bolshy," and describing the mental atmosphere of Java (three years after the armistice) as "pro-Hun," sets one thinking. The thought, the very phrasing, is that of a school-boy.

Northcliffe is dead, and how much of his influence survives is problematical. Very little, say those who should be in a position to judge. But to an Amurath an Amurath seldom fails to succeed. From all sides just now we are being warned that the control of the destinies of the world is passing ineluctably into the hands of "hard-headed business-men." "My Journey Round the World" is well worth reading if only to gain some inkling of the attitude towards world-problems that a business-man statesman is likely to adopt and propagate.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

<sup>1</sup> "My Journey Round the World." Lord Northcliffe. Edited by Cecil and St. John Harmsworth. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. \$4.00.



## CURIOSA FELICITAS.

M. ABEL HERMANT has been writing for a long time, and one can easily imagine him, as he approaches the end of his lengthy and versatile career, deciding to gratify for once a delightful impulse and producing "The Cycle of Lord Chelsea."<sup>1</sup> My feeling that M. Hermant must be well advanced in years is founded entirely on the fact that, some time around 1880, he was roundly taken to task by Anatole France, then a reviewer for the *Figaro*, for writing a novel containing some reflections on the sacred French army. How long ago that seems! And how one likes to recall a little past indiscretion of this kind in the case of some one like the aged Apostle to the Proletariat who once wrote: "It is no more disgraceful to change one's convictions than to change one's shirts."

The primary impression derived from reading "The Cycle of Lord Chelsea" is that it is a work of caprice, a little nonchalant and mannered, written in an admirable prose, and designed to show our difficult generation not only that an old man of letters can write, if need be, like a *jeune*, but that he is conscious of doing it, if anything, rather better. In short, it is a light book; but a book truly light, appearing in the midst of the bilious fantasy, the somewhat glabrous humour represented by a certain aspect of modernism, is not to be despised.

An element of peculiar fantasy (one is reminded that the word formerly signified *imagination*) is being introduced more and more into the contemporary French novel. Pierre MacOrlan would seem to be the master of this school, if it can be called a school. One can remember, however, that the word "fantasy" does not imply, necessarily, a romance like "Le Nègre Léonard et Maître Jean Mullin," which mixes consciously the real and the impossible; the world of the Isle de France with that of chimeras and myths, warlocks and witches, and the Demon in person. "La Nègresse du Sacré Cœur" by Salmon, which is about the bars and little streets on the top of Montmartre, is pre-eminently a novel of fantasy. It is perfectly possible to write a novel no more apparently fantastic than, say, "The Green Carnation," and yet by a certain inconsequence and detachment, an imaginative wilfulness in presenting persons and things, to produce an effect as wildly fantastic as that of the tales of Hoffmann. It is this that M. Hermant has, in a measure, achieved in "The Cycle of Lord Chelsea"; producing, in consequence, an original and witty, a Voltairean book.

This is not to say that it is a book likely to please every one, or even to please a large number of people. It was Mr. Chesterton, I think, who said that Prince Florizel in R. L. Stevenson's "Nights" would only be tolerable within book-covers. The same thing could be said of the noble dandy Lord Chelsea, "for whom all the fundamental questions that interest humanity had long ago been decided and regulated once for all." One discerns, too, in the character of the old lord certain proclivities not calculated to reassure the adorer of wholesome romance. But M. Hermant is far too practised to expose any of these implications directly; he is not writing a realistic novel, and he can risk that terrible retort on the part of the intelligent reader: "It was hardly worth while to write a whole book, let alone a whole cycle, about that." Hence, everything is veiled, discreet, ironic, exceedingly amusing. We re-encounter Lord Chelsea in the second volume, by far the better, at Cannes in the year 1921. His valet Nigel has just mysteriously disappeared. Nigel is an indispensable young person who "up to that moment had given no indication of depravity just as he had given none of intelligence. He was the very image of English

candour." While he is pondering his servant's disappearance, a member of the police presents himself:

'He is dead?' demanded Lord Chelsea abruptly.

'No,' said the agent; 'but he has just been arrested.'

'Oh! What for?'

As soon as these words escaped him Lord Chelsea regretted them like an imprudence and bit his lips—without, however, explaining to himself why there should be any imprudence in asking so natural a question.

Any opening is good enough to begin a picaresque romance of "high life," written with an elaborate air of unpretension. In the second chapter, Lord Chelsea goes to an afternoon at Lady Chislehurst's, "who received her friends every day, at all meals, even at breakfast and sometimes in bed," and finds her rooms invaded by Russians all of whom vaguely resemble the imperial family. Then follow some reflections on *émigrés*, particularly Russian ones, which will please anyone who has ever been bored, either secretly or frankly, by the recent landslide of Muscovite novels and Muscovite plays. "He would have enjoyed the Russians for their immoralism, which simply exceeds the imagination, had he not always observed in them a tendency to moralize from morning to night."

"The Cycle of Lord Chelsea" seems to have been designed for that rare reader who prefers a chiaroscuro rather than a noonday sun; a whole penumbra of half-lights, however equivocal, to the most dazzling affirmation that there are milestones on the Dover Road. There is a certain taste at present for works of imagination deriving from the picaresque tradition which simply expose the amusing antics of the human animal, sparing one any sentimental preoccupation or moral attitude on the part of their authors. M. Hermant does not expose; he implies. With a touch so light, a sense of the comic so delicate, one can graze any number of things which, presented in the crude and common light of realism, would be disconcerting and even horrible—morphomania, sadism, madness; but there is nothing to disconcert in a contact so light, and the result can be very amusing and very good literature. A distant light from Apuleius and the Satyricon seems to cast a faint glimmer on M. Hermant's pages. "The Cycle of Lord Chelsea" is none the less true to its time and background because its mysteries are half revealed rather under the form of a film than under the eye of eternity.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

## SHORTER NOTICES.

JEAN-HENRI FABRE, who was born in 1823 and died in 1915, belongs to the generation of Huxley and Tyndall; and although he writes with the devoutness of a Catholic, he writes, too, with the deep awe and enthusiasm for the physical world which inspired his contemporaries in England. Whatever we may say of the generation that gave forth Lubbock's little book on "Ancient Man," Faraday's lectures to children on the "Chemistry of a Candle," Huxley's "Physiography," and Sir A. Geikie's "Physical Geography," it was able to communicate to scientific subjects a good deal of the ardour that had passed away from the humanities: these books are written for children by men who still have the amazement of children at the mere spectacle of life and its environment; men who wrote with clearness, with understanding, and with a perpetual sense of delight which is lacking in the ordinary textbook. So, with a few minor changes of detail, these books remain sound to this day—the least jerry-built, the least provincial perhaps, of all the works of the nineteenth century. It is enough to say of "This Earth of Ours"<sup>1</sup> that it stands on a par with contemporary Victorian treatises.

L. C. M.

<sup>1</sup> "Le Cycle de Lord Chelsea." Vol. I. "Le Suborneur." Vol. II. "Le Royal Serviteur." Abel Hermant. 2 vols. Paris: Nouvelle Revue Française.

<sup>1</sup> "This Earth of Ours: Talks About Mountains and Rivers, Volcanoes, Earthquakes and Geyers and Other Things." Jean-Henri Fabre. Translated from the French by Percy F. Bicknell. New York: The Century Co. \$2.50.



As a work of art "The Late Mattia Pascal" has one recommendation, an excellent central idea; but this is so inadequately treated that the result is nothing less than ridiculous. By the time he is married, Mattia Pascal has got himself into such a bewildering tangle that there seems nothing for him but a life of domestic discord accentuated by the most extreme poverty. In a fit of rage he leaves the house with what little money he has still left, takes a train, finds himself at Monte Carlo, and leaves it almost a rich man. On his way back he reads in a newspaper that his body has been found in a pool near his home; some one else has committed suicide, and the body has been identified as his. Suddenly the idea that he is free, that he need not carry about Mattia Pascal and his past any longer with him, flashes across his mind. So, changing his name, he travels about Europe, enjoying his liberty for a few months, only to discover that this liberty is the heaviest burden of all, since he has to give up everything else for it. He dare not make friends; for if he does he feels he will soon be in a series of entanglements similar to those from which he had fled once before. At length in desperation he tries to make a compromise, settling in apartments in Rome, but living apart from the other people in the house. But this does not work; eventually he gets drawn in; his life repeats itself; finally he engineers a second sham suicide in order to escape once more from his life; and he returns again to his first state, in spite of its sordidness. With such a theme an artist of ability might have written a great philosophic novel; but Pirandello has little imagination and no artistic discipline, and when he essays psychology, as he is compelled to do in order to get anything out of the theme at all, he is as puerile as D'Annunzio. For the first third of the book he keeps a hand upon himself; but after that, once more like D'Annunzio, he becomes more and more wild and improbable, working up a sort of personal excitement which the reader does not share. There is an abundance of cleverness in the novel; but art begins where cleverness ends; and Pirandello's cleverness never ends, or rather, where it ends, it does not end in art. What the translator calls "the outstanding work in Italian fiction of its period" is a very disappointing and amateurish book. There is more art in one short story of Verga than in the whole novel.

E. M.

It is unusual to find literary skill in a volume of travel; it is still more unusual to find a capacity for "composition," in the sense in which painters use the word. Most records of travel read like diaries; the days with their happenings are set down one after another, and no unified picture is given. Dr. Poulsen's charming book<sup>2</sup> is conceived in a different style. He has a great deal of skill in presentation; he has a vigilant eye for the humorous and the picturesque, and his power of arrangement is such that his book has often the quality of art rather than of life. There is a wonderful picture, in its completeness indeed a picture, of life in the household of a Polish aristocrat; and it is presented so vividly that we feel we are moving among creatures of the author's imagination rather than being told of incidents in the lives of people whom he met. He dramatizes everything; he dramatizes even himself, and without egoism; and we see him, a very unprofessional scholar, a man delighting in all the forms of human nature, and especially when they are not academically virtuous, travelling over Europe and Asia Minor, and, wherever he goes, getting upon good terms with German students, Polish princes, Italian officers, Greek boatmen, Turks, Arabs, and, most difficult of all, his own relatives in Denmark. A ripe *naïveté*, a *naïveté* which misses very few things which cynicism would note, and a very strong impulse to turn all he observes from raw fact into art, are Dr. Poulsen's chief qualities in this volume. One feels that, unless he yet repents, we have lost in him a very fine novelist. This does not mean, as some might ill-naturedly assume, that what he sets down is either unreliable or incredible. Only travellers who have such an eye as his for exact detail are likely to be correct in what

they say, and at any rate only travellers of that kind are worth reading. Yet, with all these virtues, the book is a little dissatisfying. We know that Dr. Poulsen is a celebrated scholar and a man of wide and liberal mind; and we should have liked to have not only vignettes of the people whom he met in Slavonic, Hellenic and Oriental lands, but also, against the background of his erudition, his impressions of the culture of these races. If, in addition to what he has given us in this volume, he had set down a body of reflection upon culture, such as Goethe set down in his book on Italy, the volume might have been one of the most significant of our time. He has tried too completely in it not to be a scholar; has set down too obviously what he considers light and unusual; and only by oversight has he produced what is nearly a work of art. But one's last word must be that he is charming.

E. M.

THE publication of "French Literature during the Last Half-Century"<sup>1</sup> raises a question of some interest from both a literary and a human point of view. It is this: are we entitled to expect in a work of this kind some indication that the authors love literature, that they have a little gusto, a little realization of the delightfulness of the subject they are treating? Or is that altogether unnecessary, and should we be content to know that they are well-informed, that they have worked hard, and that in adding up books and reputations they have been as conscientious as bookkeepers? A colossal question, considering the number and the quality of the manuals on literature that are published. Love for France, or, at any rate, love for French patriotism, or, at least, love for French nationalism, the authors certainly have, to judge from their rhetoric; and rhetoric, if not the ideal expression of a nation, is the ideal expression of any nationalism, whatever it may be. When they approach the wars of 1870 and 1914 the pages begin to glow. The appearance on the horizon of MM. Barrès and Maurras, though they are literary men as well as nationalists, raises the style out of its business-like perfunctoriness into a sort of austere enthusiasm; when, on the other hand, Verlaine or Rimbaud is in question, the verdicts are as professorial and hasty as possible. Verlaine is given four pages and a half, Rimbaud, three; while Bourget gets sixteen and Maurras nineteen. Nothing shows better or more naïvely where the hearts of the authors lie; and in truth "*tout le reste est littérature*." The puzzle is why they should have written a history of literature, concealing in it all sign of enthusiasm for literature as such. Perhaps their twin passions for accuracy, and for France right or wrong, have swallowed up all their other capacities and given the child of their co-operative conception such a bleak look. For bleak it is, although it is enlivened by such passages as this relating to the war of 1870: "But there was one thing which Bismarck could not take away from her [France]—the intellectual leadership of Europe and of the world. Bound or triumphant, France remained the Prometheus who brought light to men and taught them the arts of civilization." Such things may very well be said, after the wine has passed, at banquets in honour of distinguished writers. But in works of this kind it is precisely the kind of fatuity to designate which Arnold fifty years ago borrowed the French word *bête*. France needs no apology; she is the custodian, as worthy and as unworthy as England or Germany, of a great literature and a great culture, and everybody knows it. But the idea that France has, has had and must always have, the intellectual leadership of Europe, leaving aside the world, which is not easily led, is only a curious idea; the more curious, perhaps, because every foreigner who writes about French culture seems to consider it a point of duty to utter it. The obvious fact remains, however, that the intellectual leadership of Europe has changed many times, and has been at various periods in Italy, in France, in England and in Germany. In saying this one does not depreciate France; one merely vindicates her reputation for good sense against the injudicious praise of her too uncritical admirers.

E. M.

<sup>1</sup> "The Late Mattia Pascal." Luigi Pirandello. Translated from the Italian by Arthur Livingston. New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. \$2.50.

<sup>2</sup> "Travels and Sketches." Translated from the Danish of Frederik Poulsen. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

<sup>1</sup> "French Literature During the Last Half-Century." Pierre de Bacourt and J. W. Cunliffe. New York: The Macmillan Co. \$2.50.



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